WHITE NIGHTS

AND OTHER RUSSIAN IMPRESSIONS

ARTHUR RUHL

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In the heart of Russia—a monastery on the Volga.

WHITE NIGHTS

AND OTHER RUSSIAN IMPRESSIONS

BY

ARTHUR RUHL

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Road to Russia	1
II.	White Nights	33
III.	At the Front	60
IV.	The Moscow Art Theatre	99
V.	A Look at the Duma	119
VI.	Russia's War Prisoners	135
VII.	A Russian Cotton King	160
VIII.	Down the Volga to Astrakhan	174
IX.	Volga Refugees	206
X.	Rumania Learns What War Is	223

ILLUSTRATIONS

In the heart of Russia—a monastery on the Volga . . *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

Coming from a military horse-show at the Stockholm Stadium 24

Ellen Key at the door of her house at Alvastra 24

Looking down one of Petrograd's canals toward the dome of St. Isaac's 34

Real Russia—Sunday picnic parties on a river near Moscow . 34

Two of the players of the Imperial Theatre, Petrograd—Kovalenskaya and the veteran comedian, Davidov . . 54

Russian reserves just behind the front dancing for a prize. The competitors stand in line at the left 66

In the Pale—Jews of Minsk waiting their turn to buy sugar . 66

Decorated—"The General appeared like a proud and slightly amused parent with his hurly-burly children". . . . 82

Young Russian officers saying good-by as they were about to leave for the French front 82

"The Three Sisters"—Germanova, at the left, who played the middle sister in Chekhov's play; Zdanova, the younger sister, and Knipper (Mme. Chekhov) at the right, who played Masha. Mme. Chekhov is seen here as she appeared in "Autumn Violins" 100

Priest Deputies to the Duma strolling beside the lake adjoining Taurida Palace 124

A group of "Pristavs," who acted as ushers, vote collectors, etc., in the National Duma 124

ILLUSTRATIONS

FACING PAGE

Professor Paul Miliukov, leader of the constitutional Democratic party and, after the coup d'état of 1917, Minister of Foreign Affairs 128

Rodzianko (at the right), President of the National Duma, and the Duma Vice-President on one of the porticos of Taurida Palace 128

The owner's house—only a stone's throw from the mill . . 162

A family group at the foot of the garden behind the house . 162

Two of the dormitories used by workmen and their families . 170

View from the owner's house—one of the mills in the distance 170

Nizhni-Novgorod—the old rampart in the foreground, the quarter where the great fair is held across the river. The right branch is the Volga, the left the Oka . . . 186

Fresh cannon-fodder—peasant recruits waiting for the boat at one of the stations on the lower Volga 202

Refugees with their packs leaving the steamer in which they had been brought across the Caspian 216

After landing across the river from Saratov—waiting for the train 216

Bargaining for grapes in a Bucharest street with a little Rumanian peasant 226

A typical residence street in Bucharest, leading off the Calea Vittorei 226

"—Little Demoiselles, looking, but for the Red Cross on their sleeves, like sketches from 'La Vie Parisienne' . . ." 238

Take Ionescu, editor of *La Roumanie*, and one of those most active in urging Rumania to enter the war 238

WHITE NIGHTS

I

THE ROAD TO RUSSIA

Our Danish liner steamed out into the Atlantic for a day or two, then turned off the regular path and laid a course which would carry her north of England. For more than a week she held north-eastward, into colder waters and longer days, until, one bright afternoon, a British cruiser came up over the eastern horizon and ordered her to stop.

Obediently the engines ceased throbbing, and the little ship—little, at any rate, before all the big liners were sunk or doing something else—fell off into the trough of the sea. We were a neutral passenger-ship proceeding under a neutral flag from one neutral port to another. We were in nobody's territorial waters, trying to slip into no blockaded harbor—in short, on the high sea, the bright, the blue, the ever-free, or whatever it was the poet said, not thinking of wars and the right of search. As a matter of fact, we were not free at all. We were prisoners, a sort of armed prize-crew were about to board us and take us into an English port, to be searched, to give up our cargo, perhaps, our

mails, or our persons, as it pleased our captors to direct.

The passengers, in their familiar rôle of helpless bystanders, flocked to the rail and watched the little dingy, with its occupants bundled in life-preservers, climb painfully over the intervening hills of green water and make the swaying rope ladder. Two young officers came over the rail, then a sailor with a brace of pistols in his belt, then another with a rifle, and last, and very quaint at the end of its long rope, a tiny little pine box of cartridges. But quainter still and, indeed, a quite touching example of that latent gentlemanliness which the English can rarely quite suppress, even when doing the most high-handed things, a grocer's box of provisions—meat, bread, tinned beef, and some absurd potatoes, which insisted, of course, on rolling out and tumbling back into the boat. These gentle pirates would never forget their private manners, though we all walked the plank.

The officers conferred with the captain, one returned, the other stayed; one sailor went below, the other took his place in the wheel-house to see that we held to the course, and we steered for Kirkwall.

Late next afternoon we raised the bare brown flanks of the Orkney Islands, where nobody can make a living but a Scotchman and his sheep, and

just before sundown dropped anchor in Kirkwall Harbor. The chill waters were full of ships—Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian—for both the Americas, and the East. There were five or six of the tan-and-green Holland-America funnels alone. The *Ryndam* was there. Some said the big *Rotterdam* and *New Amsterdam* were on their way. Still and meek as sheep they lay, waiting for leave to go, a vivid little object-lesson in the meaning of such abstractions as "power" and "control of the sea."

Next morning there came a sharper one. The winch engines were rattling as I awoke, and when I came on deck the first thing I saw was a slingful of blue-and-white striped United States mail-bags swinging up out of the hold. Shades of ancient woodcuts of the pony express, of city mail-wagons riding roughshod over everything but ambulances and fire-carts, of small-boy awe, and the traditions of country grocery stores: "Don't try to stop the U. S. mail!"

Those blue-and-white striped bags belonged to the class of things which may not be stopped or meddled with. But they *were* being stopped and meddled with. They were swinging up out of the hold by the hundred—two big tugboats full of them—and they were going ashore and down to London, to be opened, examined by the censor, and sent on when, how, and *if* he wished.

Ordinarily, none but the captain is allowed ashore during such halts, but an exception was made for the American ambassador, on his way to Petrograd, and the Honorable David R. Francis permitted, on the second day, to lunch with the commandant of the port and get a glimpse of the life of this chilly and mysterious isle. His Excellency was asked to bring his golf-clubs with him—the tawny, rolling moor looked extremely enticing from the ship—and he also took his man Friday, Phil, a body-servant of the old-fashioned Southern kind, already mourning, after but a week of foreign ways, for the hot biscuits of St. Louis. They landed in one of those Scotch mists which the natives of the British Isles learn to bother so little about.

"It's raining, Phil," said the ambassador. "I know it," said Phil, "but these people don't know it."

The commandant, a pleasant-looking little old gentleman, came off with the ambassador, and also, in his honor, the "prettiest girl in Kirkwall." And very pretty she was, too, standing in the wheel-house, with the pink cheeks that bloom in these island mists and a smoky blue muffler round her neck. Permission to leave came, too, wired up from London, and we set out in the dusk across the North Sea.

The little ship was the famous *Oscar II*, on which

the Ford peace pilgrims had crossed, and the echoes of that remarkable adventure still hung about it. To the captain and to the chief engineer the generous protagonist of the expedition had handed, as it were, an automobile as he left the ship—like a cigar. The captain said that he had done a thousand miles in his already, and had it always outside his door at home. In the summer he and his wife were going to drive all over Denmark. "I'll never walk again!" he declared, with a sly seaman's air of escaping the last of land's tyrannies.

The engineer was a tallish, jolly old gentleman, with a white beard, a sort of elongated and more ethereal Santa Claus. Frank Stockton might have created him expressly for the engineer of a peace ship; at any rate he seemed to belong to that little boat, with its snug domestic air, as indeed to these sound, tidy little countries of the north. Among his minor accomplishments was that of cutting a face on an orange and squirting the juice out of the mouth, and as he ambled round the deck on his long constitutionals he wore a flat cap fastened with a cord under his chin, giving his face an indescribable air of guilelessness.

"How good life is!" he announced one day, from his position at the head of the table. Then, as the passengers looked up, with their air of expecting to hear another salt-water puzzle elucidated,

he continued: "I have a fine wife, I have a fine daughter, a good job, good pay, and I like the sea. Why *not?*"

The North Sea was crossed without incident. Next afternoon we picked up the granite headlands of Norway, streaked with snow, touched at Christiansand, and next morning tied up in Christiania.

It was Sunday, and except on the main street leading up to the palace, the gray old town was still as a church. It was spring at home, and spring here, too, but the rocky hills of Norway come right down to the sea—one could still see streaks of snow on their granite shoulders—and there was still good skiing within an hour or so of town. Everybody was up in the hills, we were told, and in front of the down-town ticket-offices were bulletins giving the temperature of a score or so of winter-sport resorts, and telling whether it was sunny, snowy, or overcast. Every now and then one met a girl in knickerbockers, rucksack on her back, skis under her arm, striding toward the station for a day in the hills.

These young women made one think of the girl who came breezing into the old architect's life in Ibsen's "Master Builder"—Christiania gave one, indeed, the oddest sense of going behind the scenes, of looking over the shoulder, so to speak, of that grim old man of genius. Among these very masts

and warehouses lived the ship-owner in "An Enemy of the People"—this harbor might serve as a back drop. The granite headlands with their aspiring firs and streaks of snow, the very air with its undercurrent of arctic chill, seemed to invoke the Ibsen mood. Plainly, if one grew up in it, and in this old town, reaching out through its ships to the great world, yet shut in with the prejudices of a little-world capital, one would think and write in just that way.

Having thus solved the Ibsen mystery, even to seeing the name of some of his people on ordinary shop-signs, and the café where he used to sit mornings, I asked our hostess that afternoon whether he had lived right here in Christiania.

"Ibsen?" she said. "Oh, yes, of course—Ibsen. I can show you his apartment from here."

Ibsen—an apartment! "Peer Gynt" might have been written in a castle, or even in a log house on the brink of some fiord—but in a *flat!* However, such was the fact, and a moment later we were looking up at the second floor of a respectable apartment-house that might have been on the upper West Side or anywhere. And so looking, it did not appear that it would have been any easier to think as he did up there than in West Eleventh Street, Manhattan. Genius comes out of thin air in Christiania, as anywhere else, and, greatly to

one's relief, our acidulous old hero was enthroned again.

These observations were accompanied, of course, by talk of war, and here in Norway such talk was generally pro-Ally, as in Sweden it was generally pro-German. The Queen is English, the King a Dane. Norway, not having Sweden's fear of Russia, has not looked in the same way to Germany as her natural support, and with her long, exposed west coast and her dependence on England for coal and many other things (Sweden with her inside Baltic trade has, of course, two strings to her bow), she has naturally formed a habit of agreeing, if possible, with England.

The gossip that afternoon was all of mails, high freight-rates, and people getting rich. The Norwegian fishermen could sell in Germany all the fish they could rake and scrape together. Herring that used to cost a cent apiece cost four or five now, and fishermen who thought themselves well off if they paid the hire of their boats and ended the season with a few hundred kroner profit, now come back from one trip with thousands. One heard of freighters paying for themselves in three months, of a man making a small fortune merely by selling an option on ships unbuilt and not yet started. Motor-cars were beginning to dash through the staid old Christiania streets as never before.

You could go over to Copenhagen and sell anything at any sort of price, provided you could but guarantee to deliver it.

In Stockholm one felt closer to the war. Talk and feeling were more intense. It is a long day's railroad ride from the one capital to the other, during which one observed that Swedish trains do not whistle or ring a bell when they leave a station, but steal away like the Arab. Some efficiency expert added up the energy required and decided that noise cost too much. One of our party was thus left on the platform in a remote village staring at the sunset. A Russian lady in our coupé, who had lived in a Riverside Drive apartment for a few months and, in the wonderful way Russians have, learned our language, said that we had many fine things, but felt we thought too much about them, as contrasted with ideas, and that some day we should have to look out for that. She found our plays rather childish. They seemed overaccented, or cut to a certain comfortable pattern without regard to life as it is—an observation to reach which it is not absolutely necessary to have originated in Russia.

I sat in another compartment with three mysterious, smiling Japs, and an elderly Norwegian lady, suggesting Ellen Terry, rather ornate and redolent of cologne. A pretty little maid brought

her to the train and courtesied as she said good-by. Occasionally she vouchsafed a word or two of English to the four of us, varied by heavy sighs, as if, mournful though it was, we belonged in a lower, more prosaic ether. Once we passed some rapids. The Norwegian lady said that soon they would use such waters and Norway need not depend on England for coal.

"We shall have our own white coals," she said, with a tremendous sigh.

It was midnight when we reached Stockholm, and the Grand Hotel, one of those vast caravansaries with all the modern improvements for taking the local flavor out of life, swallowed us up, and it was not until I came out into the sunlight next morning and saw the Palace and the Riksdag across the water and the North Stream rushing by, that I realized that on a sunny spring day Stockholm is one of the most attractive cities in the world. Fresh-water lakes are behind the town. All southern Sweden, in fact, is full of lakes. In front are salt-water channels leading out to sea, and round the islands and twisting strips of land on which the city is built the fresh water comes rushing down, the salt breeze from the Baltic blows in, and there was scarce a place that morning where, down one street or the other, or squarely in front of you, you could not see running water and sunshine and ships.

It is as if there were rapids boiling down Madison Avenue and ocean-going craft of at least the smaller sorts could tie up in front of the Metropolitan Building. Real country with rocks, pines, and white birches comes pushing in, in the most pleasantly unexpected way, and only a few minutes' walk from the hotel I ran into a couple of eight-oared crews.

In winter the light only lasts from about ten in the morning until two, and Stockholm may be rather dismal. Possibly that is why the Swedes make so much of the summer sunshine while it lasts. Crowds were strolling along the canals, taking their coffee outdoors, in the Skansen and Hasselbacken. And the sun flashed on brass weather-vanes and the white plumes of steam from dozens of little ferry-boats, and ocean steamers coming right up to the office windows, until one recalled the blazing mosques and water and crowded shipping of the Golden Horn.

There were said to be forty thousand foreigners in Stockholm, and about thirty-nine thousand of them went crisscrossing in and out of the Grand Hotel lobby—a place in which, if one could understand every language, and sit a sort of invisible imp on any man's shoulder, one might have heard more strange things about the war and international politics than anywhere else in Europe.

Take almost any quarter of an hour. Item (1): two pink-cheeked young men in tweed suits, brown spats, and soft collars, carrying diplomatic pouches —couriers just in from London on their way to Petrograd; (2–7): various other young men with similar pouches or bureaucratic portfolios, dropping, as they hurry by, phrases in French, German, Russian, Italian, and languages only guessable; (8): four Russians in uniform, arriving hurriedly from nowhere and asking in French for rooms.

One day the Duma Committee went through, westward bound; the next, bound east, a big, bearded man, Nicolai Postisch, Prime Minister of Serbia; another day a Greek prince or a French cabinet minister. Everybody stared more or less curiously and suspiciously at everybody else, listened to see that he was not being listened to, tore up every scrap of paper into microscopic fragments before throwing them away, or stuffed them into his pocket to be disposed of later. I rang for coffee, and the polite Swede who poked his head into the doorway had been a German the winter before at a hotel in Berlin, and the porter there appeared now in a long coat, a conventional, prosperous business man—in short, all the figures of a Phillips Oppenheim novel streaming before one's eyes like a movie play day after day.

Russia is Sweden's traditional bugaboo, Germany her natural support, and on this basis has

grown a pretty solid neighborliness. The army is modelled on German methods, the universities largely so, and German ideas have been widely distributed through the habit both countries have of translating each other's books. A stranger coming into Stockholm feels this influence—in the quite Prussian policemen with their long coats and gold-spiked helmets; in the blocks of newer residences that might have been lifted from Berlin suburbs, and in various vague ways.

The war had strengthened, for the time being, at least, the power of the Conservatives—those, that is to say, who were friendly to Germany, felt that the Russian danger was real (and continually used it for party purposes), did not wish to increase the powers of the Parliament, and wanted a larger army and navy.

This group, which controlled all but one of the Stockholm papers, talked bitterly of the hypocritical chatter about fighting for the liberties of small nations, of mails and cargoes, as they put it, "stolen." The air was full of protests against England's "bunkering agreements," and lively stories of adventures with it. One Swedish captain said he'd be dashed if he'd sign, coal or no coal. So he put to sea, burned out what he had half-way across the North Sea, tore out his woodwork, and came into port on that.

It was interesting, and thoroughly in keeping

with a time when so many accepted phrases are changing their meaning, that a Swede might be politically Conservative and at the same time, in his social views, what would generally be called broad or even radical at home. One young man who had spent a good deal of time in social-settlement work in America, and who took me through one of the model Stockholm public schools where everything helpful is provided for children, was later described, somewhat to my surprise, as a Conservative. It was explained that the Conservatives often favored socialistic legislation, but looked at it from the German point of view, in which benefits for the people were combined with the individual's subordination to the state.

The Conservatives would talk about the perfidy of England as long as one would listen—some with fury, some quite soberly, and with disappointment, evidently genuine, at what they described as the failure of powerful America to co-operate with the smaller neutral nations in a stand for neutral rights at sea, before it was too late.

The Liberals, on the other hand, minimized the Russian danger, the need of extreme measures of military preparation, and were, generally speaking, friendly to England. They believed that England had gone too far in taking cargoes from neutral ships, but that much of the hardship of neutral

shippers was the inevitable result of war. They felt that Sweden's democratic ideas had come from England, and feared the reactionary uses to which the Russian danger was being and might be put. Some said that it would be to Sweden's advantage if Russia got her way at the Dardanelles—that she might cease to be a danger in the north.

The bitterness between these two groups was intense, and when Russia began to fortify the Aland Islands, only a stone's throw out into the Baltic from Stockholm, the chances that Sweden might be forced into the war seemed anything but remote.

The war touched Sweden directly when, once a week, the transports of German and Russian exchanged prisoners went through—broken men, of no more use as soldiers, scrapped, and sent home. I saw them at Hallsberg, a little town about four hours from Stockholm, where the Swedish Red Cross train stopped for them to be rested and fed.

The volunteers in charge of receiving the prisoners went down from Stockholm on the morning train —several pretty Swedish ladies, who, for the benefit of the one Englishwoman with them, dropped every now and then into English, and a keen, bullet-headed man with glasses and a stick over his arm, who appeared to represent German societies in Sweden. It was a beautiful morning, and as the train hurried on the ladies talked amiably of what

they had brought with them, wondering if there were enough cigarettes. "But I don't suppose," concluded one, "that the poor consumptives ought to smoke much, ought they?" Eighty out of the last lot of two hundred were dying of tuberculosis, and four did die on the train.

We whirled down through the lake country—lake after lake fringed with pine and white birches, the whole ground purple and white, sometimes, with violets and anemones. At Hallsberg tables were set with soup-plates and big disks of hard Swedish bread; boxes of chocolate and tobacco opened; and on a counter on the platform the bullet-headed gentleman laid neat rows of boxes and paper bags. The boxes were in the red, white, and black German colors, and on the paper bags, each of which contained tobacco, post-cards, chocolate, and so on, was stamped "*Von Landsleuten in Schweden*" ("From fellow countrymen in Sweden").

There was a whistle, the pink-cheeked Swedish cadets cleared the platform, and the long train rolled slowly in. The bunks were down and from several of them yellow-white faces were raised enough to look out. Most of the men, however, were able to walk, and on crutches, helping one another, they worked out to the platform. Only a few were Germans, the rest Austro-Hungarians, bundled up now in new and stiff gray-blue over-

coats, sent to meet them at the border. A few had curly black wool caps given them in Russia, and one young fellow still wore the blue-and-gold-braided jacket of a Hungarian hussar.

There could be no doubt, as they stood there in the sunlight, that they were no longer to be feared as soldiers. They were past all that, beyond cheers, band-music, waving flags, and all the old excitements of war. One could imagine them looking back to the days of 1914, when they flocked to the colors and went marching eastward on the start of the tragic circle which now they were completing, as old men look back to half-real, sunshiny memories of things they did as boys. If it amused these kind ladies to play with their kindness and add a piquant dash of tragedy to the soft spring morning, all very well, but we must not expect them to get excited about it.

Most of them had lost a leg or a foot; most who had legs dragged along with difficulty, clothes and boots covering something unhealed or unhealable. One such man scuffed along crabwise in a big felt boot. Several wore black glasses and seemed more or less blind, one man's head was still a bundle of bandages, and one had a round black hole where his face should have been. He had been shot through the jaw and the wound had healed, leaving him with no nose or upper teeth. And on nearly all

lay a waxy pallor which affected one strangely, like the beating of black, invisible wings.

The cadets began to sing a song of welcome. The prisoners, drawn up in front of them, listened apathetically. How many times had they been lined up thus—to be drilled, inspected, fed, shot at, to get the numbers that each now wore—now to be sung at! Very well, sing away; nevertheless, they saluted and muttered a respectful "Hoch!" at the end.

The ladies started with their flowers, and presently each one of the prisoners was holding a fresh daffodil. They brought baskets and began to pass things around, and at the word "cigarettes" the men even began to show signs of interest. Some grinned, and each as he took his package straightened and brought his stubby fingers to his cap. When one of the ladies set her basket down and went back for another the long coats gathered around it and began to poke into it, somewhat as fish, becoming reassured, gather round some new and suspicious sort of bait.

There were all sorts of things in the basket. One took a pipe and turned it over and over as if he had forgotten what a pipe looked like. Most of them took one of the colored handkerchiefs, unfolded it, looked at it critically, folded it up again, and carefully stowed it away in a coat-pocket. The men

began almost to push around the basket, until a petty officer growled "Langsam! Langsam!" ("Slowly!")—and they drew back. But the lady came back with more—there was enough for everybody—they took what they wanted and, still in the same half-dazed fashion, moved off toward the station dining-room very slowly, like a biograph picture keyed down.

After dinner the prisoners gathered on benches under the trees, some one brought out an accordion, and they sang. They sang "Deutschland über Alles"—rather wearily compared with the gay choruses, full of lively tenor, of the young Swedes, and after each song one side applauded the other and the ladies smiled and clapped their hands. A signal came finally, and they climbed back on the train, still carrying their wilted daffodils.

A young Swede hanging over the high fence of the railroad-yard shouted out, proud of his German and the foreign places he had seen, "Leb' wohl!" and that he had been in Germany, and in Austria, too, in the Tyrol. Three young cadets passed me, puzzling out the penciled address on a post-card one of the prisoners had given them to mail. It was somewhere in Budapest.

Budapest in springtime!—and the Danube flowing by, and bands playing csárdás, and people dancing in Városliget, and the gay crowd flowing

along the Corso, under the lights and trees! So that was what he was coming back to. To get well again and be a hero—or a bore, perhaps—to his family and friends, or, with all his troubles over, simply to gutter down in the next few weeks like a burned-out candle? What had these men accomplished and what did it all mean—this thing that was still going on as if they had done nothing? Something of that question seemed to show in the officers' eyes as, clicking their heels and stiffening, they saluted the women who had served them. The men, too, brought their hands to their caps, and the train, with all its riddles unanswered, rolled away in the soft May sunshine.

Morning coffee was over, and the daily play was beginning again in the lobby of the Grand Hotel, when a porter appeared with a folded blue paper. It was a telegram from a little village on the other side of Sweden, from a villa by a lake. "*Hemma Tisdag*" it read ("Home Tuesday"). There was just time to catch the train.

We hurried across Stockholm's canals and into the country: lake after lake with pines and white birches, sawmills and timber rafts that would presently be turned into paper and read in American cities, red barns and red farmhouses and trim fields —and finally a wide stretch of water at the end of

the line. It was, I supposed, an arm of the sea, but really Vettern, one of the big lakes of southern Sweden, seventy-five miles long, ten or twelve wide, and somewhere near was Alvastra and the home of Ellen Key.

No one could speak English at the little station, but somebody pointed out the general direction, and I started down the road. Straight ahead was a dark pine ridge, a sort of low mountain running out into the lake, and at the base of it, across the bay, there glimmered a little white summer-house or pergola close to the water. I remembered having seen a picture of that somewhere and decided that the house just above it in the trees must be the one.

It was tea time now, and back in Stockholm the palm-room was crowded and clattering, the orchestra-leader tearing the last shreds out of "Tosca," and people glaring and listening at their neighbors and wondering who their neighbors were. Very quaint they looked, at that distance and from the quiet of the country, all the queer fish criss-crossing yet never meeting, all the smooth gentlemen with pointed black beards and pointed black coats, who think that nations can still be packed up and carried about in a diplomat's little leather bag—as, tragically enough, they sometimes are. Decidedly like puppets; and with rather an enter-

taining sense of escape I tramped on to the little hotel perched half-way up the hill.

It was not really in running order for the summer, the landlady was away, and I was again struggling with the sign language, when somebody came to the rescue—a tall, dark, grave, distinguished-looking lady who spoke a little English and brought a vague odor of attar of roses. She was from Finland, also come to see Ellen Key, with whom she was dining that evening, and she said she would report my arrival and find out when it would be convenient for me to call.

They are novel and interesting, these Finlanders, to the simple-minded American who thinks of Finland as consisting of reindeer and ice. Every grown-up person votes in Finland, and the women sit in the Legislature. And this far-away place consists, apparently, not of reindeer and ice, but of lively and intelligent people who speak every language you ever heard of. The companion of this particular lady did, indeed, speak all the languages of Europe; she was a tremendous politician and suffragist, spoke familiarly of Mrs. Chapman Catt and other Americans, and she was, as her card related: *Medlem av Finlands Landtag. II viceordforanden i internat. Kvinnorostrattsalliansen. Ordforande i Svenska Kvinnoforbundet i Finland*—which means a member of the Finnish Diet, among other things.

They said when they came back that night and we had tea together that Miss Key sent her best greetings and would be delighted to see me at ten next morning. So at ten I walked through the woods, down a steep path, to a house set in the hillside near the water, which made one think of summer places at Oyster Bay or Coldspring Harbor, and rang the bell at a big door in the upper panel of which were two old-fashioned little heart-shaped windows.

Instantly there was a tremendous barking and thumping of paws—Miss Key's St. Bernard is as big as a house—a maid accustomed, evidently, to such pilgrims opened the door, and a moment later I was shaking hands with a sturdy little woman —a very-much-alive woman, with a quick, humorous mouth, a longish, speculative nose, and gray-blue, wise, kind eyes.

The Finlanders had remarked that the only two women known all over the world to-day happened to be Swedes—Selma Lagerlöf and Ellen Key. The responsibility that such a position implied did not appear to weigh heavily on the one in front of me. Who or what this person might be who came knocking at her door at ten o'clock in the morning, obviously she had not the remotest notion, but she was one of those who are ready to take a chance. And, quite as if I had been making these morning calls for years, we sailed into the next room, where

I was told to take the rocking-chair, as that was what Americans liked.

There were two rooms, one after the other, the first of which, with a small table by the window looking on the lake, was used as a dining-room, the other as a library. But the table was not set, and both together made one long living-room full of air and sunlight, books and pictures—evidently given by the artists themselves. One could see without examining them that the place was full of things which had been thought about and cared about, and were there for a reason. The result was not exactly a drawing-room, and certainly not the rather prearranged disarray of the den of the very literary, but a comfortable sort of combination of the two.

Miss Key—the name is pronounced "kay" and is derived from a Scotch ancestor, MacKey, who came over to fight with the great Gustavus—sat herself in a straight-backed chair against the wall. She wore a gray wool gown, or sack, as the satirical might describe it, which belonged, one would say, to the class of things intended to be useful and to merge into their surroundings rather than to call attention to themselves. Her white hair was parted gravely in the middle, and she wore a broad lace collar and two or three hammered-silver ornaments.

Coming from a military horse-show at the Stockholm Stadium.

Ellen Key at the door of her house at Alvastra.

She looked comfortable, and she showed at once that she was not hard to get at. She spoke English rapidly, with an accent and occasional slips, guessed what one was thinking before one had completely said it, and not only had her answer ready but gave the impression of being prepared to say exactly what she thought about anything: a woman with a great deal of vitality and cheerfulness, who enjoyed living and believed in life itself. She might have been sixty-seven, as she is said to be, or from her readiness and good humor thirty-three, or twenty-eight, for she had arrived at that happy age when ages do not matter, and one is interested in life and in helping make the world go round.

We spoke of some of her books which had been translated into English, of "Love and Marriage"—"Lines of Life" it was called in Swedish—which was rather widely read in America a few years ago. This book, as it is perhaps scarcely necessary to recall, was, in general, a plea for love itself, for the dignity of human instincts and impulses and a recognition of the fact that there may be divinity in them as well as in what is called spirit, and in health a natural union of the two. It protested against the human energy lost to the race in rigidly subordinating every one to an ideal only to be realized by the few, and those not always the most

fit, and looked forward to a time when morality of parents should be measured less by legal rules than by their love for each other and the earnestness with which they assumed responsibility for their children.

Many have thought and written toward such an ideal, and have promptly been attacked by the puritanical, while the vulgar made their idealistic speculations an excuse for their own light-mindedness. Such, of course, was the experience of Ellen Key, for what she said powerfully and beautifully could easily be given quite another meaning if said in a different way.

To endeavor to repeat her comments that morning about this aspect of her work would be only to paraphrase clumsily what any one can find better expressed in her books. The significant thing was to receive the same impression of seriousness and high purpose from the writer as from the writing itself. It is not important, perhaps, that thinkers shall embody their own thoughts, provided the latter are important in themselves, yet I do feel that suggestions of reform in such matters as this come with less authority from a green-complexioned lady smoking hashish than from a regular human being like Ellen Key in such a home as this.

The great American secret that the human body stops where the conventional collar begins is not

shared by the Swedes. In Stockholm the print-shop windows are full of pictures by Zorn and his imitators: jolly peasant nymphs sunning themselves on rocks, splashing each other in the surf, squinting at you and the sunlight from the grass by the riverside, where they have just slipped out of their clothes—pictures full of youth and health and sunshine, which the late guardian of New York's morals would never for a moment have allowed in New York, and which, thanks to the encouragement of such self-consciousness, would doubtless block the sidewalk if they were put on view, but which scarcely attract a glance here from the street boys as they pass by.

Bath attendants in the Stockholm hotels and public bath-houses are generally women. These white-armed Brunhildas pursue into the nethermost corner of the bathroom the trembling American—trembling not so much from modesty perhaps as at the poverty of his own ignoble and clothes-degenerated shape—and there flop him about and scrub him as if he were so many square yards of kitchen floor. At family bathing-places—that is to say, places where only one family swim—bathing-suits are not infrequently dispensed with altogether, and the rocks and blue waters of the archipelago between Stockholm and the sea are full in summer, so one is told, of these "pink seals."

On some such atmospheric differences as these is doubtless based the generalization often heard from returning tourists that the Swedes are quite unmoral, and that it is no disgrace to child or parent whether the parents be married or not. I asked Miss Key how this might be. She answered that among the upper classes conventions were similar to ours, but that the peasants looked at such things very simply. With them it was the child which often brought about the marriage ceremony, or indeed the ceremony might follow it, the desire of the parents to take care of their child being the natural basis on which they built their home.

This accent on the importance of the child leads without much difficulty to the notion encouraged by some and amusingly used in Mr. Shaw's "Man and Superman," according to which woman is the pursuer and man at best the mere means to an end. Miss Key showed more feeling over this than over anything she talked about. The idea—this *Schrei nach dem Kind,* which, she said, was rather a fad in Germany ten or fifteen years ago—was to her detestable. If love was not to be a sort of religion and the man and woman together round the child, to build a home, what was the use—"what do such women live for?" she asked.

The Conservative papers had criticised Miss Key for her un-Swedish or pro-Ally leanings, and

she would have been criticised in the same way at home, for being pro-German. In other words, she looked at the war as a humanist and knew too much of the fine qualities of all the people engaged and of the mixed justice of their behavior since the war to swallow the usual campaign of hate against either side. She spoke of Romain Rolland, with whose ideas, I should say, she largely agreed. His picture was on the wall, and she remarked that his was the most difficult kind of courage—to set yourself against the tide in your own country in time of war. At the same time she was by no means ready to fall in with every movement for peace. Only a day or two before, she had declined a request to write an appeal for peace to be signed by the women of the world.

"*We* might sign it," she said, "but we could not get the women of France or Germany or England to sign it. So what meaning would it have?"

I spoke of the idea of non-resistance—that by refusing to fight you made fighting absurd, and nobody would fight you—and asked if such theories did not ignore fundamental human instincts.

Miss Key said that doubtless this was true, and there were plenty of subjects on which to direct the fighting instinct, but that the instinct of the tiger had been something which civilization had been trying to control for some time. Between

individuals and small groups of people difficulties were already referred to a higher power—it was no longer a disgrace not to fight a duel; the man who proposed a duel in England or America would simply be laughed at.

"The men of this landscape [Miss Key here quaintly transliterated the Swedish word *landscap*, which means "province"] used to go across the lake and attack men of the other landscape. Now that is not even thought of—the national power makes it impossible. The trouble with peace advocates to-day is that they have only their desire for peace, and that we have as yet organized no higher power to appeal to."

We had talked for an hour or so when Miss Key hopped up, put a little kerchief on her head, and suggested that we go out and see the view. We looked at that and at the little toy-roof tacked to one of the trees under which she sat on the ground and read. We walked far away down into the wood under the beeches, talking of the effect of war on democracy, the present crisis in Sweden, quaintly mixed up with views of the lake, lilies, and anemones.

Back over her shoulder, as she trudged on, Miss Key spoke of the Russians—a gifted people, of fascinating possibilities, not tired like some other races, indeed scarcely yet begun. The lack of

organization, all the slackness, dirt, corruption, and stupidity—these could not be changed in a day. "But the Russian soul, yes—I believe in that," she said.

It was beautiful out there, under the great gray beech-trees, the ground covered, literally, with hepaticas, violets, and anemones. Prince Eugene, a painter as well as brother of the King, had once, she said, made a picture of it.

My train left at two o'clock, and I intended to walk back, but Miss Key insisted that I must have a bite first. She had gone to the kitchen to order tea, when she popped her head through the door to ask if I wouldn't rather have chocolate. Decidedly yes, and again she disappeared, only to pop back and ask if I would rather have it made with water and then add cream, or made with milk. I said milk, and so it was, and we had it with Swedish brown bread and butter at the table by the window looking out on the lake. That table must be a great place to have breakfast on a sunny summer morning.

The chocolate finished, there was just time to say good-by and run, without seeing the statue on the balcony up-stairs or the waves painted on the bathroom door, or some of the other things which had interested the ladies from Finland. As we stood in the hall I looked up at the mottoes

on the walls, and Miss Key translated them. Those on the sides were from a Finnish poet, and about one's country. Opposite the door was Goethe's "Memento Vivere."

"They generally say 'remember to die,' but he thought it was just as important to remember to live," said Miss Key. Over the front door was a phrase in Swedish, the sense of which was that the time to begin living was now.

"That is my philosophy," she said.

II

WHITE NIGHTS

There are few places where there are so many gloomy, strong, and queer influences on the soul of man as in Petersburg. The mere influences of climate mean so much; then it is the administrative centre of all Russia. . . .—DOSTOYEVSKI.

THE white nights come with spring. By June there is almost no night at all, only a sort of deeper twilight between twelve and two, when another day is dawning. The sun is still well up in the sky as you go to the theatre. When you drift out into the refreshment-room, after the third act, for caviare and smoked-salmon sandwiches and tea and *kvass*, with that winter-night feeling which the theatre lights and warmth are likely to give an American, there, through a gap in the curtains, still shine the daylight and white walls of the Petrograd streets. Walking home, toward midnight, you can still read the players' names in the small type of the programme, with what is left of the daylight. It is light, yet not day; still, yet not night, but a strange, half-lit interval between, theatrical as those amber twilights that come sometimes before summer wind-storms on the prairies. The tops of things, gilded domes far down the

street, the thin gold spire of the Admiralty, are touched with a light like that which touches mountain-peaks before sunrise. Walls facing the west are lit as if by the rising sun. Those just across the street, on the other hand, everything on the west horizon, the whole sky-line across the Neva, is in black silhouette. Coming down the Moika Canal from the Opera, the great dome of St. Isaac's is a colossal dusty amethyst. A moment later, directly beneath it, it is as dead and black as a burnt-out volcano.

The light brings a strange alertness. It is as if one had a sort of second sight, had drunk something which turned other people's night into a magic sort of personal day. One walks on and on—though it is bedtime, why go to bed?—down past the wistful bright spire of the Admiralty, past the great red piles of the Winter Palace and the War and Foreign Offices, and along the river.

The broad Neva is empty, the huge arks that come down from the birch forests, piled with firewood, sleep along the river-wall. Across the river the roofs are cut out of dark-blue cardboard except where the golden needle of the Church of Peter and Paul picks up the sun. On the curved stone benches built into the river-wall, facing the Winter Palace and consulates and embassies, boys and girls, the boys in students' military caps and long

Looking down one of Petrograd's canals toward the dome of St. Isaac's.

Real Russia—Sunday picnic-parties on a river near Moscow.

dark overcoats, sit whispering, making love, planning Russia's future, perhaps, in the face of that long row of cold stones. One feels strangely wide-awake and yet at peace—night without its gloom, day without its worries or reality. And Petrograd becomes beautiful, mysterious, and kind—finds, at last, its own individuality. Over the edge of the earth somewhere other cities have their hours—Broadway's lights are flashing, the sun is blazing on the stucco walls and blue water of Rio. But these white nights are Petrograd's own, and belong to it and this cold white north.

At other times, particularly in those never-ending rains and marrow-chilling mists, one feels the "queer and gloomy influences" that Dostoyevski wrote about. A queerer place for a great modern city it would, of course, be hard to find. Petrograd is in the same latitude as the southern end of Greenland. To get to it, nowadays, you must go almost to the Arctic Circle and back again—three days' express-train ride from Stockholm north to Tornea and then south again through Finland. It was built on swampy islands with no proper drainage, and even now your hotel room shakes when a heavy truck drives by. Everything to eat, drink, burn, and wear comes from far away. It is dark and cold in winter, hot and smelly in the short summer, and the Baltic, whenever it has nothing else in partic-

ular to do, pelts it with mist and rain. In the nearly continuous daylight of summer, things grow rapidly, yet the grass and dandelions seem only here on sufferance, as it were, and the wind has but to change and one feels a breath like that out of an ice-cavern. By the end of October snow is back again.

It is not so much a town as an act of will. It was the will of Peter the Great, determined to have his "window on Europe," which forced it down the throats of the jumble of peoples he was beating into an empire—there is a delightful picture in the Tretiakoff Gallery in Moscow of the Great Peter, striding along in the rain, trailing his soaked and wind-swept courtiers behind him—and the cold, stern power which has kept that empire together—I speak, of course, of the Petrograd of yesterday—is always in the air. It is the place from which the rest of Russia is governed, and seems to consist—to put it into American terms—of post-offices and public libraries. A stranger in London or Paris or Bukharest or Buenos Aires can drift up and down the streets amused and entertained at once—he steps into a warm mist, so to speak, of neighborhood feeling. There is little of the sort in Petrograd. The Nevsky is a fine, broad thoroughfare, but the crowds there seem mere collections of detached units. They do not seem to be saying, as people do in the famous streets

of other great capitals—as they do, indeed, in the narrower streets of Moscow: "This is *our* street! This is where *we* live!"

Of course there are many interesting things in Petrograd, from the Old Masters in the Hermitage Museum to the new masters of politics and ballets. There are theatres, the concentrated intellectuality that gathers in any great city; there are hospitable and charming people, but these are all things inside of walls and under roofs rather than outside them.

Soldiers were everywhere while I was there—big blond boys in long tan overcoats with flat caps slapped rakishly over one ear. They drilled in dozens of squares, on the cobblestoned space below the dome of St. Isaac's—which suggests St. Peter's and Rome—and marched the streets day and night, singing their tremendous Russian songs.

Three or four files started the air, after a measure or two the next section came in, and so on down the street until presently the whole column was booming a sort of "round." The song, wild and melancholy with tremendous basses, went down the street in a series of waves, and as one descended in front of you another was flung to the housetops a little way down the block.

These recruits marched slowly, with a curious rolling of the shoulders and swinging of their long tan

overcoats. Their feet went out and down with a snap—*clop* . . . *clop*—in a sort of modified goose-step, and to accent the rhythm they were taught to swing the free arm, the one not carrying the rifle, in a wide, slow arc, almost up to the opposite shoulder and back again. And this slow, deliberate reaching forward and setting down of each foot—one recalled Kipling's "bear that walks like a man"—together with the long, high swing of the closed fist, repeated by innumerable blond giants in long, swaying overcoats, was curious and impressive. There was something more than accident in this, or the drill-sergeant's notions—something at once tremendous and quaint, something of the faith, heaviness, and slow, unconquerable power of Russia itself.

On the big, dusty parade-ground out toward the British Embassy they sprawled in open order, firing unloaded rifles at imaginary Germans, or galloped through imaginary charges across bits of imitation trench. There was a stuffed figure, like a football dummy, in front of the trench, with wooden arms so arranged with springs as to suggest enemy bayonets. The recruit was supposed to charge the dummy, strike aside the arms to left and right without letting them strike back at him, bayonet the dummy, scramble up to the top of the trench, jab the air in front, drop into the trench, jab to right and left, then scramble out and come to at-

tention. A drill-sergeant stood by and criticised technique.

The recruits waited in little squads—young peasants just raked in from their villages and awkward at this business of killing—and charged the dummy one by one. As each one's turn came he galloped forward, bawling a lugubrious sort of battle-cry: "*Waw—aw—aw—aw . . . !*" *Slap*—to one side—*Slap*, the other side. "*Oof!*" He jabbed the straw man, scrambled up the trench, panting now—"*Oof! Oof!*"—to each side. Down into the trench, a final "*Oof!*" and out again. It was a curious spectacle on a bright morning—the great bare space covered with little men, galloping thus, and filling the air with their embarrassed and melancholy bellowing.

"Just before the charge they are all atremble." . . . At Contan's, with the Rumanian orchestra playing, a young Dutch war correspondent who had seen a great deal of Russian fighting, and even been in a charge himself and decorated for it, was giving his impressions. "The mitrailleuse makes them angry; all at once they seem to go mad, their eyes bulge out, they look so positively frightful that when they come over the trenches the Austrians simply throw up their hands. They are fearful, those faces—you can't imagine how ferocious—and then all at once, when the charge is over,

they are good again, and they march back, sleepy, good-natured Russians. . . ."

Across St. Isaac's Square, past my hotel, came trooping every day the new levies—peasants in wrinkled boots, flat caps, and fur caps, homespuns and sheepskins, carrying their teakettles and boxes just as they had been dug up out of their far-away villages. Soldiers with bayonets fixed scuffled drowsily along in front of, beside, and behind them. There was generally a wagon with luggage, and a peasant wife or two shuffling along with her husband, or trailing behind wiping her eyes. And sometimes a shaggy peasant boy, intoxicated by the sight of Petrograd and the whole tremendous adventure, squatted on his heels and began kicking out his boots one after the other in honor of the great city, war, and life in general.

In the theatre one forgets the city's coldness and constraint—possibly one of the reasons why Russians are so fond of the theatre, why they will listen with delight to long-drawn-out, undramatic pieces, provided they bring some of the warmth and quaintness and deep feeling of Russian life itself. I remember with what a sense of surprise after a week in Petrograd I woke up, as it were, one evening in the theatre. It was one of those genial old plays of Ostrovsky's which are played in Russia year in and year out, and the audience,

happy and alert, seemed composed of quite different people from those in the streets. In the long intermissions they poured into the refreshment-rooms, where samovars were steaming, and had tea and sandwiches and cakes, went back for more of the play, returned for more sandwiches and tea, just as they mix drama with sandwiches and beer in Germany.

Every morning long lines of people wait for tickets at the various windows in the great Imperial Theatre—poorly clad girls and students, dull, ordinary-looking people of the small-merchant class—and the great auditorium, with its five balconies, is packed every night. There are plays of Ostrovsky, Turgenev, and Tolstoy—pieces most Americans never heard of, but as well known to Russian audiences as "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The Russians keep on liking such plays—they have the quiet, solid permanence which in America is found only in novels.

Everything in these imperial theatres has an air of spaciousness, solidity, and sound tradition. The rooms on the stage are real rooms—you look through one into another just as large, and people come down a real stairway, from a second-story drawing-room almost as completely suggested as the big reception-hall into which they descend. The acting, if somewhat conventionalized in com-

parison with the more original and progressive methods of the Art Theatre in Moscow, is always sound and admirable. Every performance has a certain urbanity, like the humor of *Punch* or the comedy in an old-fashioned three-volume novel. There are no absurdly advertised and overaccented stars in these stock companies. It is a life-work for the players, their place in the imperial scheme of things. They have traditions to live up to. They are all known to the audience, and have been known for years; they are its friends, faithful servants of the public, and of their art.

In the white nights, too, people go to the islands —another place where one forgets the "queer and gloomy influences of Petersburg." The islands are a part of the Neva delta given over to boating-clubs, summer *dachas*, and restaurants by the water; a place where these summer-starved north Russians—and Russians are all fond of the country—can flock in these long evenings to row and swim, to eat outdoors, and stroll under the birches of Yelagin Island, listening to the nightingales.

The endless daylight gives a novel sense of leisure to outdoor things. You don't have to hurry home at any particular time; one can go right on playing tennis until ten o'clock, and there are swimming-parties scattered along the Neva branches until well into the night. A constant string of open car-

riages, ramshackle public cabs, driven by shaggy *izvoschiks*, fancier private ones with a fast, satin-black trotter in a cobweb harness trimmed with Cossack silver, go pattering across the bridge toward Yelagin. Some go to Felician's and drink champagne at several times what it is worth, and some to humbler places, where the view and air are just as good, and have tea and *kvass* and cabbage soup; some spend the night with a band of gypsies, which is supposed to be the wildest adventure of all, and some merely go out to Yelagin and drive round and round.

One evening at Felician's it poured buckets all through dinner, and afterward, in the freshly washed amber twilight, we hailed a boatman from across the river and went rowing. The old fellow talked constantly. He had three sons in the army; one had lost an arm and two others were wounded. The losses had been terrible, he said—why, in Moscow there was a whole factory full of wounded! But Russia would last longer than Germany, nevertheless. There were plenty of Germans in Petrograd—the Russians themselves wouldn't send them out. There was no such thing as an honest man.

Across the river was a tall brick tower or chimney with a sort of spiral railway down the side, which had cost the man who built it fifteen thousand rubles. He intended it as an amusement scheme

and thought the government would decorate him for it, but people didn't take to it, the government didn't decorate him, so he hanged himself.

And this, in the tranquil white night, with the birches on the river-bank, and the melancholy song about a factory girl who committed suicide (very popular with young folks' picnic-parties), coming across the water seemed, somehow, tremendously Russian. They appear to live by their feelings more than we do and have great ups and downs. Go into a *traktir*, one of those shabby tea-houses where cabmen, marketmen, women car-conductors, and the like used to drink vodka and now drink tea. The faces are extraordinary, different from those even in the poorest quarters of our cities. There are men who look like Tolstoy and sit staring into space and looking like Tolstoy for an hour at a time. A girl leans on her elbow with a hand thrust into her hair as if she were playing a tragic third act. Another girl comes in, touches her, and in a flash she bursts into a gale of high spirits. They change quickly, but in such a company you will find little of that happy-go-luckiness, that slangy defiance of fate, characteristic of English and Americans. More often they seem preoccupied in the every-day world, fiercely analyzing life, and ready, over things which would only jar us slightly, to go wild with enthusiasm or to cut their throats.

They carry one train of thought, particularly gloomy thought, to unheard-of lengths. You have a blue Monday and let it go at that, but Mr. Artzibashev has a blue Monday, and he writes "The Breaking Point," in which everybody decides that life is not worth living and kills himself. Of course Mr. Artzibashev is not quite sincere, because if he really believed his theory he would not spend all the patient and highly concentrated intellectual effort necessary to write three or four hundred interesting pages proving it. The answer to the book is the book itself. Mr. Artzibashev finished it. He has power, nevertheless, and there was, indeed, a sort of epidemic of suicide of which his book was a reflection. It, and work similar to Artzibashev's, came with the reaction from the unsuccessful revolution of 1905.

Out at the islands, too, is a Y. M. C. A. athletic field, and on one of these white nights I watched Russian boys in running clothes go through a setting-up drill with an American instructor, and took a turn with them myself around the cinder path. Afterward there were tea and sandwiches, with a samovar at the head of the table, Russian fashion, and the army hydroaeroplanes from the practice camp near by drumming up and circling overhead to settle back like ducks into the river.

Russian boys know so little about sports and

taking care of their bodies that any such work as this has more than ordinary interest and value. The Y. M. C. A. has a good gymnasium in Petrograd, and reading and lecture rooms. There was no end to their appetite for lectures, the superintendent said, lectures of any length, on almost any subject. I said something about the comparatively greater interest Russians had in speculative things. Yes, the superintendent said, it was partly that, and then also they had almost no sports or games, and few of the ones they reached had the American boy's common-school education.

Any such work has to proceed with great tact where there is such suspicion of possible religious or political propaganda as there was under the old régime. Even the usual name was not used, and the organization was known by the Russian word for lighthouse. To fit local conditions they also had a distinguished patron who made himself responsible, in a way, for the good behavior of the organization under his name, and was an easy, concrete head to which complaints could be directed.

This use of a patron suggests another quaint and thoroughly Russian institution, the "responsible editor." Newspapers were so much embarrassed by having their editor lugged off to jail that they hit on the idea of having two editors—an

anonymous one who did the real work and a figurehead who was paid a nominal salary to have his name printed at the top of the editorial page, and to go to jail when the authorities demanded that the editor be arrested.

Americans were also conducting a crèche for refugee children and a little military hospital. The crèche rent the American colony asunder, as such enterprises sometimes do, and while I was in Petrograd the ladies of one faction were not speaking to those of the other, and when invited to dine at the same house were immediately prostrated with headaches. The children were well looked after, nevertheless, and the soldiers who got into the hospital, which seemed less productive of dissension, were lucky enough. I saw the convalescent ones, big, devoted children, learning simple arithmetic and copying letters from a child's primer as carefully as if they were illuminating manuscripts.

Those who could, wrote letters after they were discharged, on scraps of paper, with nearly every word misspelled, yet full of their peasant devoutness and gratitude. One of the American ladies who knew Russian had translated and printed in a little pamphlet a number of these letters:

Much esteemed Madame Directress of the Hospital of the American Colony, from Fedor Stochilin, treated by you: I bow low to you, and I thank you for your kind care of me

and all the wounded. Now my whole family prays to God for you, much respected baroness, and my mother is always talking of the good and kind Barinya and sister, and even tells all through the village about you. And I bow low from my waist to the other sisters and also thank them many times, and again I greet Nikolai and all my sick comrades. I wish them everything good and a quick recovery and to return home soon and see their dear country where we were born and grew up; only fate was not very kind to us. . . .

Greetings, my dear sister; I hasten to assure you of my deepest respect and with great love I bow to you and I wish you from God good health, quick and happy success in the work of your hands. I inform you, my dear sister, that I received the money you sent to me—four rubles—and I express my deepest gratitude to you and to the whole Committee of the American Colony. I was surprised and deeply touched by these four rubles, for the things I had made were very few, and I did not ask to have money sent me for them. For this reason I am surprised and deeply touched, not only I but all of my family, that among us Russians there are also foreigners who enter so into the needs of our dear defenders of the fatherland. . . . When I feel homesick I look at the picture and, closing my eyes I see one sister and another and the third moving about. I see the ventilator buzzing, the aeroplane [a toy aeroplane the soldier had made himself] turning from side to side, and it seems as if I were back in our dear lazaret, and this comes very often to my mind. . . .

Greetings and greetings, much esteemed Barinya. I send you my respects with love and a bow from the white face down to the moist earth. . . . I arrived, thank God, all right. My parents and dear children met me as if I had

come from the other world; they did not know what to do; they were very happy to see me again. But now, dear Barinya, I do not know how I shall live. Things are very bad with me. My wife planted five dessiatines of wheat, but God was not good to her and the little children and only thirty-eight poods of grain was gathered. And besides that there is nothing. . . . I am not able to work, no pension has been given yet, and it is uncertain when there will be one. Now the snow is very deep here, so that I am unable to walk. It is very difficult and very bad. . . .

(Written from the hospital to a member of the colony.)

Greetings, most kind lady, and the lowest of bows. We bow to the moist earth, and we kiss your feet and your white hands, and we wish from our hearts everything good, from the Lord God good health. Most kind and dear Barinya, when we heard of your unfortunate accident we were very sad; I even cried. We were very sorry; we are as sorry as if you were our own mother. You take trouble for us like our own mother. Dear and precious Barinya, we cannot express in words our gratitude for your kind and good acts to us; we are very sorry for you and will ask in our prayers that God will be gracious to you and will give you health. We await you impatiently like our own mother. And now good-by, dearly loved and much esteemed Barinya; we will pray God for your recovery.

D. M. Zinevitch and also F. Chergenko and also all the wounded. We wish you all that we could wish for ourselves. . . .

The Petrograd and Moscow hotels were buzzing with agents and commercial scouts. There were

all sorts of Britishers—for England was fighting Germany here as bitterly as in the field—and a good many Americans. Some of these pioneers spoke Russian, understood Russian customs and psychology, spent tact and money lavishly to make friends in high places—were, in short, accomplished diplomats and reaped corresponding rewards. Others, amusing or pathetic as one looked at it, wandered about like lost sheep, more helpless even than the down-trodden race of war correspondents, who at least were likely to speak a little French and to be used to landing on their feet in unaccustomed places, and butted their heads in vain against official red tape, indolence, and inaction.

It was interesting to watch the change come over Americans—see them arrive full of steam and the notion of getting a lot done in a hurry, and gradually lose their energy and optimism until they either went home defeated or got a sort of second wind, and understood that the game in Russia was a new one and called for an amount of patience, leisure, politeness, and apparently aimless palavering which they never dreamed of at home. The differences are not altogether unlike those which American commercial travellers encounter in Spanish America. A knowledge of Russian is the fundamental need; then the outsider must be prepared for interminable waiting,

and he should learn the trick of looking at least as if he had no doubts and liked it.

Some one said, one day, that the difference between Russia and Germany was this: In Germany everything was forbidden—*verboten;* in Russia nothing was forbidden; on the other hand, nothing was permitted. There is a bureaucratic type whose psychology quite baffles the go-ahead Westerner. Whether these men are subtle or merely stupid he never can tell, but a complete vagueness seems to be their end and aim. Even when they speak English they do not seem to understand it; they gaze, with the curious preoccupation of a professional boxer, at the ceiling or one's feet or at nothing in particular, and seem determined to escape the concrete and definite. In the blandest fashion they forget to-day what they said yesterday and agree on something to-day only to point out to-morrow, in the same bland way, some antecedent bit of red tape which throws out the whole matter. Occasionally there is a lingering Byzantine who seems capable of anything, like the wicked little girl in the "Brothers Karamazov," who dreamed of "eating pineapple compote while people were being crucified in the courtyard." This type seems the product of a life devoted to devising ways to keep people from doing things—one way being to oppose this impersonal, slightly yielding mountain of op-

position, like a vast heap of putty, against which the fretful invader bangs his head in vain.

Such encounters are, to be sure, incidental discords in a rather general welcome. This vast agricultural empire, which imports most of its manufactured goods, presents conditions often very like those in our own West, and American trade is, generally speaking, encouraged, as our agricultural implement and automobile manufacturers have already found out.

Moscow is a night's ride south of Petrograd, twelve hours' express-train journey into the real Russia. On one trip down I shared a coupé with a young officer, back on furlough, who lived in Moscow and thought little of Petrograd. The war was returning Russia to the Russians, he said, and when it was over Moscow would be made the capital. This seemed improbable, yet Moscow is the natural capital, geographically, and in many sentimental ways as well.

It is a big, genial, easy-going village of a million people, compared with cold, cosmopolitan Petrograd. And the moment one sees the ancient, saw-tooth Tatar walls of the Kremlin, and the gilded domes of the innumerable churches, and the big market with its fresh fish and crabs and fruit, in the very centre of the town beside the big hotels, and drives through the narrow, genial streets with their

endless shrines and bells, there is no doubt that one is at last in Russia. It is something to be in Moscow on one of the great church days, when all the bells are ringing, even the big bass ones. The whole city rumbles and vibrates with their music; there is a continuous dull roar like that of trains rolling over far-off bridges; the very air shakes with the vast diapason.

I shall speak later of one of the great cotton-mills of this city of merchants and cotton-spinners, and of its Art Theatre. The Tretiakoff Gallery is another institution. It was given to the city by a member of one of the old merchant families, and, instead of the usual groups of western European Schools found in most art museums, is filled almost entirely with Russian pictures. These painters are all Russians of our own times, and their work, to a stranger from the west, has much of the stirring, unexpected quality of Russian stories and novels.

Set a bit above the city behind ancient Tatar ramparts, the Kremlin churches lift their little gilded domes to the sun. They are old and beautiful. With their gold and candle-light and some dusty shaft of daylight, which itself seems old, descending sharply from a barred slit far overhead, there is nothing in them that belongs to our century or to the west that doesn't seem to have been devoutly hammered out by hand four or five hundred

years ago by people whose history, one might say, most of us know nothing about.

Peasant pilgrims, shaggy and a trifle smelly, from hundreds of miles away, perhaps, shuffle in and, taking towels from their packs, mop their faces and necks, before starting in to pray. Peasant mothers come with their babies and little children to kiss the tombs of the saints, to lift up the little children and press their lips to the hands of the saints' images, or to lay their babies on the picture of St. Michael on the top of his tomb and leave them there for a moment's sanctification. There are forty-seven tombs of tsars in one of these little Kremlin churches, and you will see a devout peasant woman go down the line kneeling and kissing each one.

In few places is Russia's different religious past felt more strongly than in Kiev, in the Kievo-Petcherskaya Lavra, the ancient monastery there. With its chapels and pleasant old gardens—it was founded in 1062—it is set on one of the hills overlooking the Dnieper, and underneath the buildings and twisting far underground are the galleries and caves where the old saints had themselves walled up, except for a little slit through which food and water were passed, and there lived out their sacrificial lives.

Their mummies, wrapped in red silk, are laid

Two of the players of the Imperial Theatre, Petrograd—Kovalenskaya and the veteran comedian, Davidov.

outside these underground cells, and in the dim candle-light a string of devout people—many of them soldiers in uniform—shuffles by to kneel and kiss the covered folded hands. The silk coverings must be changed every year, worn out by this reverent kissing. There are monasteries and old chapels in the west, but they go back to a past with which we are more or less familiar—one has a hazy notion, at any rate, of French and Italian and Spanish religious history. Of the Eastern Church and the life and legends that went with it most of us know little, and there is a curious impressiveness about this unfamiliar antiquity—frescoed hands worn off by centuries of Slavic kissing, of saints whose names we never even heard of—sudden vistas going back to Byzantium instead of Rome.

Kiev is not only an ancient and holy city—Russian history began here, indeed, in the ninth century—it is also a busy modern one—the main gateway to the west of Europe—and the streets are full of traffic and moving-picture shows. There is a neighborhood feeling here, too, and on another of the hills overlooking the river a particularly attractive sort of restaurant-park where everybody flocks in the evening to promenade and see and be seen.

I shall speak presently of a prison-camp in the

outskirts of the city, and with Kiev is associated another adventure—a swim in the Dnieper—quite characteristic of a Russian summer.

Kiev is on the bluffs of the west bank. The east shore of the river consists of low sand-flats, an ideal bathing-place, and people rowed across from Kiev, walked up the sand a bit, and went into the river *au naturel*, like small boys in the old swimming-hole. A diminutive youngster of a ferryman rowed me across, and as the boat grounded on the flats a big, Rubens-like woman, holding a wad of skirt in front of her, somewhat after the manner of a baseball catcher's shield, was wading into the stream. Three tiny daughters, all tanned from head to foot a beautiful Indian brown, splashed after her. When the mother got above her knees she handed the shield to one of the children, who paddled back to shore with it, while mamma, with the air of a happy walrus, toppled into the stream.

I picked out a good bit of sand, planted my stick therein, hung my clothes on that, and forgetting censors, delayed permits, prisoners, and war, gave myself up to the delicious and unaccustomed sun, and a survey of the river. For a mile or so, up and down, people were sunning themselves and swimming, all as careless of clothes as so many fish.

There were men who, although the front was

only a few hours' motor ride away, seemed to have no more pressing work at that hour in the morning than to stand stretching themselves in the sun. There were many mothers, with little children playing about them, who had the air of coming here often to spend the day. Each had his little spot on the sand and paid no more attention to anybody else than natives do bathing in some tropical river.

A picnic-party of four young people landed a little way down-stream. They put their lunch-boxes on the sand; the boys walked away a bit, peeled off their clothes and jumped into the river; the girls went in by themselves. Just in front of me a party landed—a pretty girl in white, and two men, one of whom appeared to be her brother. They took up a claim on the sand, the men stepped aside and, like the others, hurried into the water. The girl, standing erect in the bright sunshine, slowly unpinned her hat, took off slippers and stockings, by some deft and apparently absent-minded sleight of hand, slipped a boy's bathing-suit under her skirt, reached down inside her waist, pulled it on, and so slipped out of her dress, and into it, as neatly as you please. She didn't swim, but only lay down to sun herself, and the grace and nonchalance with which she carried the whole thing off were delightful to see.

With a novel and most refreshing feeling of getting out of a cage, I took a run down the beach and back again. There were several old bumboat women, with little stands where they sold currant-cakes and lemon-pop, and it was quaint to stalk up to these stands and bargain over a few kopecks' worth of cookies with these thrifty old women, who thought only of the kopecks and paid no more attention to their somewhat exotic-looking customers than to the paper on the wall. Once, out of some tufts of beach-grass, projected a pair of able-bodied legs on which a tiny girl was splashing sand. As I jogged by, the owner sat up and revealed, not the little girl's father, but a handsome woman of thirty-five or so. She said something to her daughter, smiled, and, reaching casually behind her, threw across her shoulders one of those fringed white Russian shawls, splashed with roses. When I came back a few minutes later, mother and daughter were just starting for the water. Clad as Lady Godiva, except for the shawl, mother and child strolled into the water, then the little girl took the shawl back to shore, as the other had done, and they swam together.

It was pleasant to sit there in the August sunshine by the warm Dnieper River and be sunburned equally all over, and to find how quickly, when clothes are thrown away altogether, people

seem just as much dressed as other animals. But a one o'clock train for the prison-camp snatched me away from this Arcadia, and before I could return again a telegram had come from Petrograd, calling me back for our long-postponed trip to the front.

III

AT THE FRONT

The train left Petrograd in the afternoon and rolled lazily southward through the pleasant, broken, Russian country—pines and wistful white birches that somehow made one think of half-remembered, melancholy bits of Russian novels; fields in strips, yellow, green, and white with buckwheat, and always, somewhere near, a white church with its cluster of gilded or indigo or sky-blue domes, like little upturned balloons.

There is nothing tight or neat or finished about this Russian landscape. It is as wide and loose and easy-going as Russian nature itself. Sometimes there are fences, more often not—they seem to get along just as well without fences. People have been living here for a thousand years, and yet much of it looks like new country. Behind this there are disorderliness and indolence, to be sure, but it is not quite so simple as that. There is a different way of thinking altogether, the way of faith rather than works, and a people less certain than most thrifty westerners are of the importance of material things, governed more by their impulses than by what we call common sense.

No prodigy of faith or repentance too wild to spring from this unexciting plain. Here you may still meet pilgrims, with matted hair and the faith —and dirt—of the early Christian martyrs; down just such country roads the whole countryside goes marching and singing, with ikons and incense and pictures of saints. And it seems quite as natural to a Russian peasant to throw himself on his knees and kiss the earth he has defiled with his sins as to drive fence stakes into it.

The long train was packed like all overnight trains out of Petrograd, and to work up through it to the dining-car was, in a sort of way, to walk through Russia itself. There was a car of the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons Lits, a remnant of peaceful Europe and a trifle more expensive than the "government" sleepers, and here, in comparative seclusion, a grumpy old general in a pale-blue overcoat with vermilion facings, blazing with orders, and a distinguished-appearing lady, who looked as if she might be bound for a hospital near the front of which she was head sister or patroness.

Then a regular sleeper, crowded with officers going down to their regiments; then two or three bare third-class coaches, windows closed and jammed with soldiers singing, playing accordions, and wondering who the devil you might be as you waded through boots and teakettles, and that hot, close

soldier smell of sweaty wool, tobacco, and boot leather. Then a civilian sleeper packed with people for the provinces—students in embroidered blouses, a vigorous old dowager clattering away at the top of her lungs, a fat little *chinovnik* (prosecuting attorney, very likely, in some distant "government") snoozing in the corner of his coupé, curtain drawn; and, leaning out of the open window in the passageway, a woman, wrapped Spanish-dancer fashion in a white-fringed shawl splashed with big pink roses, smoking and watching the view. And from the open coupé doors, as one edged past, came glimpses of people making tea, strings of those throaty diphthongs so hard for a foreigner to pronounce, and the odor of strong perfume and cigarettes.

Merely to get a place on one of these overnight war-time trains out of Petrograd, even those running away from the front, is something of a feat, and requires a military pass, or a letter from one's embassy, or at the least the help of one of those devious old commissionaires who hang about hotel entrances and, for a few rubles, somehow succeed in opening doors against which the stranger bumps his head in vain. A line half a block long is always waiting outside the up-town ticket-office, and when you finally get to the window there is nothing vacant for the next two weeks. But, you explain, you must

be in Moscow to-morrow . . . the ticket-seller merely lifts his shoulders and turns to the next man.

Why, in this untroubled interior, should this be? Why not run more trains or run them faster? But why, for the matter of that, did it take you twenty minutes to buy an ordinary ticket to one of the Petrograd suburbs, and why does the ticket-seller close his window half a minute before the train leaves, to go wandering off somewhere in search of change? Why does a man sweeping out a restaurant laboriously sweep a peck of broken bottles the length of the room instead of first picking up the glass and carrying it out and then sweeping the dust?

Russia is full of such dark mysteries, impossible to solve. One of the first things you learn after crossing the frontier and having the letter of recommendation from the State Department to your own ambassador, which you proudly exhibit, seized, while your overcoat pocket bulging with papers goes through untouched, is not to demand logical explanations. Take things as they come, in this vast and fascinating country, but don't ask why.

The restaurant-car, still carrying its advertisements of hotels in Brussels, Ostend, and the Riviera, was crowded with officers in high, tight boots, snug breeches, and tan-covered Russian blouses belted

in at the waist. Most of these young men are not in the least "Russian" as the word is often understood at home—neither black and bristling, nor with broad cheek-bones and close-set, slanting eyes. They are more likely to be tallish, blond young men with blue eyes and close-cropped tan mustaches, who would pass in a crowd for Americans or Danes —or even Austrians, for the matter of that. They look well in their soft boots and blouses, and, while stiff and soldierlike when necessary, generally have a rather easy-going, boyish air, which the comfortable lines of their uniforms help to carry out. Most of them speak French, and the few who know English are generally rather pleased to practise it.

One on our train had been to New York, where he spent most of the morning, he said, watching people boiling in and out of the hotel lobby. "You Americans seem to have something inside you, driving you. . . ." He had had a great time in New York, and found people extremely hospitable, although it did not strike him that they had any homes. In London, he said, if a man asked you to his house you had a feeling that he belonged there and liked to stay there, but his New York acquaintances seemed to regard theirs as places to sleep in or to stop in for a little until they could go somewhere else.

Another, a nervous, clever-looking youth, son of

a distinguished general, gave the following explanation of the vast number of Austrian prisoners captured in Brusiloff's offensive:

"Well, you see," he said, "my ancestors had a certain sort of culture, but they didn't take many baths. The Austrians have been taking baths for a long time, and when they have been in the field awhile and can't get a bath or a shave, and be comfortable, they become frightfully sad. They can't stand it, you know. Why, in our first advance on Lemberg in 1914, when the whole army was marching twenty-five miles a day, and we slept on the ground with the men, I had—well, you know, I had animals on me. You would have to make up an army of—of African negroes to put up with what the Russian army stood during that march!"

I asked him about the Germans—hadn't they been taking baths for some time, too? He shook his head. "No, they're wilder than the Austrians," he said.

At Orsha next morning we left the main line and turned west toward Minsk and the Polish front. Minsk is at the jumping-off place between Russia of the Russians and Russia of the Poles and Jews. Riga is some two hundred miles northwestward; Lemberg, round which the armies of Brusiloff seemed then to be closing, a similar distance to the southwest, and westward through Baranovichi, Brest-

Litovsk, Ivangorod, and Warsaw, Russian Poland itself.

We passed troop-trains with soldiers singing—those mighty choruses which the Russian soldier learns as part of his training and which he takes to naturally after the sonorous prayers he has always chanted in church—hospital trains bound for the interior, and presently were hurtling dizzily through the crowded, cobblestoned streets of Minsk behind a wild young soldier-chauffeur with a flat tan cap slapped over one ear.

Minsk is within the Pale, half the population are Jews, and amid the salt fish and pickles, dirt, old shoes, old clothes, and hungry bargaining of the poorer quarters it is only a step to our own Allen and Rivington Streets. Army motor-trucks and strings of the little, cradle-like farm-wagons, used in this part of the world, fought for way near the station, and the shopping streets seemed composed, in about equal parts, of moving-picture shows, photographers' windows full of officers' pictures, and the officers themselves.

There was one of those pleasant, shady parks you find in every Russian provincial town, where people walk in the afternoon, and in the evening the world repaired to a restaurant-garden known as the "Track" where one took dinner or tea while the youth and beauty of Minsk promenaded on a

Russian reserves just behind the front dancing for a prize.
The competitors stand in line at the left.

In the Pale—Jews of Minsk waiting their turn to buy sugar.

walk just below the tables or rode round a little bowl-shaped track on their bicycles. They were expert at this quaint amusement, and some sat bolt upright with arms folded, and so went round and round the whole evening, in a sort of delighted trance.

It was here, with the arc-lamps shining on the dark park trees, and those curious, silent bicycles swimming past us like figures on a merry-go-round, that a Russian officer began to talk to us about war and things in general. He was a short, rotund little man of middle age, a professor of Romance languages, who had gone out to serve in the cavalry.

"There are only two really beautiful things in the world," he declared after telling how they had held a bridge until the guns came up—"love and war. Even a battle-field—yes, when you've seen a battle-field"—and he doubled up his short arms in imitation of the dead lying there—"there is a certain æsthetic beauty even in that!"

Looking at him there, puffing a little in his snug uniform, with its collar pushing up into his sunburnt neck, one could imagine how, after a lifetime spent in ill-ventilated classrooms, fighting with phrases, he had found in fresh air and danger and the jolly teamwork of war his first glimpse of reality. There must be a good many such—not

professional soldiers, whose point of view is very different—but I never happened to run across one quite so intoxicated.

"I wrote a play out there while we were on trench duty. It's laid in Italy in the early Renaissance. Better than reading a translation of some stupid foreign novel—you know those little paper editions they sell you in our railroad-stations—that was all we had. But plays, pictures, art, what is it all after this? Rubbish—shadows of shadows.

"Take nature"—and he swung his cigar toward the black wall of trees across the track—"what do I care about it in peace times? But when I go out on a reconnoissance, how I look at every leaf! I'm part of it. There's significance in everything, every shadow, sound, smell of the wind: it all means something—death, maybe. Any second may be your last. And when you once get that idea, have accepted it, then you're not afraid. It's like throwing off a weight. You're a disembodied spirit. Of course we know now that when Spencer wrote that war had gone out of fashion and that man would devise substitutes for it, he was writing foolishness. We talk of the Dark Ages. Why, the Dark Ages was a harmless game between Oxford and Cambridge schoolboys compared with this war. And the next one will be worse."

He ran on as people run on in Dostoyevski's

novels, as Russians really do run on in every-day life—and next day run off in another direction, perhaps a quite contrary one. They take ideas with a curious intensity, and jump on a new notion and carry it to endless lengths. He wondered if we had not been on the wrong track altogether with our theories of peace and tranquillity—"Christianity, even, tells us not to fight, and Christianity started more fighting than anything in history!

"Of course, in England, it's the fashion to be comfortable. You've made a god of comfort and contentment—a man daren't be unhappy in England. If he is, he is queer—and whatever you are you mustn't be queer. You know"—and he turned toward the Englishman—"and please take this lightly, and as I mean it, for I've had pleasant times in your country: I don't like the English. There is something bourgeois—you've made a distinguished bourgeoisie, but it's the contented-grocer business, nevertheless. Can any great mind be 'happy'? Who of your great men was happy? Shelley wasn't, surely, nor Carlyle, nor Wordsworth—in his later years, at any rate."

"Shakespeare was!" said the Englishman, plumping out the great answer to all such arguments as this. The Russian didn't reply with Mr. Shaw that Shakespeare didn't worry about his soul because he was only an ordinary Englishman, plus

magnificent rhetoric. He retorted that there was nothing to prove it by except his work.

"Of course Russians are just the other way," he said. "The Russian isn't happy unless he's miserable. He's got to be suffering for something —for his sins or for an idea—to think everything is wrong, and he must make it right. . . ."

He went breezing on into various aspects of the perilous life—poets getting married, and so on—he knew all the contemporary Russian poets, he said, and we were drifting down the moonlit street, still talking, when he found that it was train time. I had meant to ask him where he put hospitals in his scheme of beauty, and if he had ever watched the regular morning dressing of bad shell-wounds, but he had just time to hail an *izvoschik* and tell us to hunt him up some time in Petrograd.

We visited various hospitals in Minsk—a big evacuation camp by the railroad-track, where, in double-walled tents almost as warm as houses, the wounded were sorted before being sent to more permanent stations inland; another, in a school building, under the patronage of a grand duchess, was intended for serious surgical cases—trepanning, smashed jaws, splintered back-bones, and so on. The head sister here explained things in perfect English and French as if receiving guests in her own drawing-room, and the whole place had the

air of being run by those who knew not only their present business but another world as well.

Then there was a big barrack hospital, similar to such hospitals elsewhere, but interesting, as many things on this trip were, not so much for its novelty as because it was in Russia, and part of that tremendous improvement which, with the help of the Zemstvo Union, the Union of Cities, and other volunteer influences, had been made in the organization of sanitary and commissary service since the war began. Our hosts seemed to feel this, too, and they showed us disinfecting machines, model laundries, and bacteriological laboratories, with the air of saying: "You see, we too have all these things. . . ."

Our party was one of those personally conducted groups, familiar enough on most of the other fronts, but rather a novelty in Russia. There were three English correspondents, two Frenchmen, an Italian, two Hollanders, and two Americans. Then there was the Foreign Office secretary, who had charge of correspondents, two young officers from the headquarters staff, not to mention cooks, chauffeurs, two sleeping-cars, restaurant-car, four automobiles, and the flat cars to carry them. Commandants must have trembled as they saw us coming, but they rose to the occasion with characteristic Russian hospitality. Everything they could do they

did, and, more or less continuously eating, shaking hands, and drinking tea, we proceeded down the steps of military hierarchy from the staff through army, corps, and division commanders to the first line itself.

With the headquarters staff we lunched—one of those spacious Russian repasts whose peculiarity consists in this, that you eat enough *zakuska*—that is to say, caviare, salads, sardines, smoked fish, bread, butter, and cheese, and other hors-d'œuvres—for an ordinary meal; then the meat boiled in the soup, then the soup itself, and then begin on a regular dinner, ending with pastry and sweets.

The commander of the —th Army we encountered in a rambling old farmhouse to which we came in the dark, and still farther on next morning a corps commander at the pleasant country estate of some absentee Polish gentleman a little way behind the line. He was a general of cavalry, a clean-cut, soldierlike officer who combined an air of knowing his profession—he had written books about it—with the graces of a man of the world. After the usual hand-shaking down a long line of staff-officers, we went out with him on a tour of inspection.

All the little thatched villages in the neighborhood had been turned to military uses—pigs driven out, walls whitewashed, fresh pine doors put on,

and the place made livable. In one such cottage was a paymaster and his clerks and a million rubles; another was full of packages from home; in another soldiers were stamping letters, twenty-five thousand of which went through this army post-office every day. We poked through a big hay-barn piled with stores, onions in strings, lentils, potatoes, dried mushrooms, pepper—"It takes lots of pepper to get to Berlin," the general punned in French—fresh butter in tubs from Siberia, jam, preserves, bread (three pounds for each man a day), and tons of sugar. In short, whatever embarrassments people might have in the interior—in Petrograd housewives might only buy ten pounds of sugar a month and must stand in line for hours sometimes for that, and meat they might buy but once a week—it was plain that there was plenty of everything at the front.

The farmyard hospitals were quite Russian in their easy-going, rather haphazard comfortableness. Beds had been put in renovated barns and cow-sheds; at one place they had improvised a Russian bath, and a dozen or so soldiers were baking themselves in true *banya* style. Several of these farm hospitals were only half filled, and with their sunny orchards and smiling young nurses they suggested suffering less than summer resorts.

In one orchard we met a lady-doctor, very young

to be a doctor, with pale skin, black, slightly upslanting eyes, and hair combed straight back except for a little old-fashioned bang that suggested some picture of Manet's. She was writing letters at a table under a pear-tree, and got up only long enough to show us the tent where she and the nurses slept, and then returned to her writing again. It is fashionable, of course, to be a nurse nowadays, but only the highly recommended or those with influential friends get these chances at the front, and most of those we met had an ease of manner which their homely surroundings only enhanced. There was always some one who spoke English or French or both, and our progress through these farmyard hospitals had all the amenity of an agreeable house-party.

One of the always novel sights of Petrograd and Moscow these days is that of these volunteer nurses, each with her flock of ten or a dozen convalescent soldiers shuffling along the Nevsky or the Neva wall, going to the movies or staring wide-eyed at the pictures in the Tretiakoff Gallery or the Hermitage. You always wonder what they are saying, these lumbering peasant boys who have never perhaps been away from their distant villages, and their demure little chaperons who have not infrequently lived the carefully guarded lives of young ladies of society until the war gave them their red

cross and nunlike head-dress and a chance to wander about town like a sort of Harun-al-Rashid.

Generally speaking, these field-hospitals seemed well equipped and well managed. The only lack that particularly struck me was that of protection against flies. To any one used to American screens and our almost morbid terror of the fly, Russian indifference to them is rather appalling. Possibly, the shortness of the Russian summer has something to do with it. In one big tent, which had only one small opening, to which a screen door or a mosquito-netting could easily have been fitted, the flies swarmed over the men. Some fanned themselves with little willow switches, but the weaker simply lay back and let the flies crawl over their faces. In another place two badly wounded men had been put on cots in the open air without any sort of netting. A nurse waved a switch toward them now and then, but the flies swarmed over the bed and on the men's faces, nevertheless.

As soon as our general hove in sight you must imagine soldiers jumping to attention at the warning cry of "*Smerna!*" and splitting the quiet air with the greeting always given to officers of superior rank. The phrase means "A health to your Excellency!"—*Zdravia jelaiem vashe prevoskhoditelstvo!*—but the devoted peasant soldiers, straining every muscle to stand as stiffly and shout as loudly

and quickly as they can, roar it in a sort of prolonged bark, beginning with "*Zdra*" and ending with "*stvo!*"

The general always smiled and acknowledged the greeting with a word and wave of the hand. He chatted and laughed with the men and nurses in the wards, and the whole morning left an impression of great good nature and of fatherly relations between officers and men—an impression similar to that one receives in so many different forms in this paradoxical empire, whose government has been so stiff and whose people so easy-going, and in their relations to each other one of the most democratic in the world.

We lunched at the country-house headquarters that noon at a table set under the trees, with the regimental band in a circle tooting on the lawn. And after more of the beguiling *zakuska,* including delicious stewed mushrooms, and a long and genial dinner with claret and toasts and an enemy flyer over the distant tree-tops, we went to see the Russian aeroplanes.

As we did so I was reminded again, as an American not infrequently is in Europe, of the comparatively decorative quality life often assumes where feudal traditions still survive. The owner of this country-place probably had some sort of title. Looking at the solid old house with its conserva-

tory, strolling through the formal *allées* of the little park, one could imagine other places like this in the neighborhood and a pleasant and even rather courtly coming and going between them, and it was a trifle startling, on stepping through the willows that screened the house, to find behind it, and doubtless its material support, a distillery.

The flyers went hurrying up from the meadow as soon as we arrived. There were four of them, and one of the young birdmen did a beautiful series of spirals, shifting from a left to a right hand turn, and then volplaning down and shooting up again. One of our party went for a ride so far that everybody forgot about him, and when the little speck did appear, the zealous gunners of a near-by battery promptly sent a couple of shrapnel-shells out to meet him. At least so the passenger said, and next day while recounting his experience to another airman on another part of the front, the latter responded breezily: "You were very lucky—generally, when we fire at our own planes, we bring 'em down!"

Back for tea—for nothing goes very far in Russia without tea—and after changing stations overnight, off in the motors at six next morning toward the first line itself. Behind a pine forest, screening us from the German observation balloons, horses were waiting, and here, too, was the division com-

mander wrapped in his brown felt-like Russian overcoat; a genial, slightly whimsical-looking man with spectacles, pointed black beard, and mustaches, more "Russian" than our general of the day before.

It is not easy to make clear just what one means by this—partly it lay in little differences of appearance and intonation, but also in a certain expansiveness and, so to say, disregard of the main chance —a man who might, as it were, stop to talk about religion although he did miss the train. Western Europeans are, somehow, more cut-and-dried, more keen on "accomplishing" something.

He received us like old friends, and at once, with eloquent gestures and expressive use of eyebrows, went off into a monologue, a sort of semiserious oration about what we were going to see—how we mustn't do this, *but* we should do that, and he couldn't fire such and such a battery, because the enemy might reply *and* hit us, *but* and so on—all with such kindliness and hearty enthusiasm as if he felt we were the most important things in the world—as very likely, at the moment, he did. One of the English correspondents commented on the difference between his manner and the monosyllabic, almost diffident way in which a British division commander would have done the same thing.

Divided into groups of three or four, we mounted

stocky little Siberian horses, very like our own bronchos, and rode for four or five kilometres through the fresh-smelling pines to open, hilly country and the trenches. Once we had to gallop over an open place already pockmarked with shells and in sight of a German observation balloon; there had been a brisk skirmish the night before, and one of the farm hospitals we visited later that morning was full of wounded, but the trenches as we came into them were quiet as a park. Over by the village of Krevo to the right, where the lines met, we could see the smoke of enemy camp-fires, but even after ten or a dozen shells from our amiable division commander's big guns had wailed over our heads to throw up clouds of earth and smoke in the German entanglements two or three hundred yards in front of us, they were too bored to reply.

We returned past camps of reserves, a cemetery where a Russian priest was burying a soldier killed the night before, to the bomb-proof and snug little arbor dining-room of the regimental colonel, a charming old gentleman, with a white beard and the manner of a shy and dreamy Santa Claus. He showed us his bomb-proof, with a guitar on the wall and geraniums in the window, gave each of us a big porringer spoon, shaped like the wooden spoon the Russian soldier sticks in his boot, and made by some of the men out of aluminum from German

shells. Then orderlies brought in a steaming samovar, and we had tea and biscuits and cheese, and so back to the motors again.

We drove into sunny farming country, where peasant women were working in the wheat, visited more farmhouse hospitals, and finally turned into a big meadow with a decorated pavilion on high ground at the farther end. It was the tsarevitch's birthday, the honor men of a regiment just back from the trenches for reserve duty were to be decorated, several young officers were off for France, and the whole was made the occasion of a big regimental family party.

Our corps commander of the day before had motored over to distribute the decorations, several of the volunteer nurses had been invited, too, and after the usual elaborate hand-shaking, we all sat down in the pavilion for lunch. It was hard to realize that war was only a few kilometres away—on a similar fête day, on the Austrian side, the Russians first broke through in their big offensive.

In the midst of the luncheon there was a bugle-call, and several of the young fellows who had been eating and laughing with us jumped up and began to say good-by. But evidently it was no ordinary good-by. Each came up to the priest, who blessed and kissed them, and then they and their comrades embraced, throwing their arms about each other,

and kissing, Russian fashion, with tremendous fervor on the mouth. These were the men going to France. A company waited a little distance away, and this was to join companies from other regiments. They seemed very few and France a long way off, and one couldn't help wondering if many of these lads would come back, but this aspect of the adventure did not disturb them, and in great spirits they galloped off down the meadow.

There were toasts and hot cinnamon punch, and then began the distribution of medals. The regiment, or at least that part of it which had just come from fighting, was drawn up in half a hollow square with those to be decorated on one side. The corps commander stood behind a little table, and the men came up single file, just as they had marched from the trenches, with all their fighting kit—cartridge-boxes half empty, hand-grenades at their sides, every man with his gas-mask in a tin tube dangling from his belt.

The Foreign Office man could tell where each one came from as soon as he spoke. "There's a Little Russian—that's a boy from Petrograd—this one's from Mongolia—here's one from the North—my country. . . ." They seemed to have come from every corner of the empire.

As each approached he saluted, looked the general square in the eyes, and barked out his greeting

at the top of his lungs. The general thanked him for his good work and pinned the medal on his chest. Then the soldier barked out the phrase which means that he was glad to suffer for his country—"*Radi staratsa vashe prevoskhoditelstvo!*" which came out rat-tat-tat—like the beat of a snare-drum. Some got mixed, one or two were so stage-struck they could scarce speak at all, but most of them nearly blew the general's hat off.

The general smiled, patted them on the arm, asked some what they had done to deserve their medals, and appeared like a proud and slightly amused parent with his hurly-burly children. When the last man had stumped away with the stiff-legged parade step, the general stepped forward, addressed the regiment, and called for cheers. The Russian soldiers' cheer is not like our three hurrahs, but a sort of "round," like their songs, with everybody roaring as long as he has breath, a continuous "ray-ray-ray-ray!" like the cheering at our political conventions. There were cheers for the tsarevitch, for the regiment, and I don't know what else, and then with the men's voices roaring all over the meadow the regimental band swept in with the Russian hymn—"*Bozhe Tsarya khrani*" ("God Save the Tsar").

Then the sports began. They danced and sang and climbed a pole and there was one particularly

Decorated—"The General appeared like a proud and slightly amused parent with his hurly-burly children."

Young Russian officers saying good-by as they were about to leave for the French front.

popular game played by two blindfolded men tethered to a stake with ten or fifteen feet of rope. One had a whistle, the other a sort of stuffed club, and it was the latter's business to catch the first, whack him as hard as he could, and then throw the club away. Then both crawled round until one or another found it and the chase began again. Pair after pair of these big tan-colored children joyfully blindfolded themselves and bumped and butted into each other, every now and then rolling over, their clumsy boots in air, like bears at play.

The sports were still going on when the corps commander and guests were asked to inspect the regiment's new camp in the pines at the foot of the meadow. Although here but four days, they had neat little sanded paths marked by pine branches and flowers stuck in the ground, beds of pine boughs spread on logs, and everything snug as a ship. We tasted the soup, and one of the soldiers was called out to show his underclothing. It was interesting to find that it had the stamp of the Zemstvo Union and also to watch one of the officers stand during the whole episode with his hand on the somewhat embarrassed soldier's shoulder, smiling and every now and then patting his stout, tanned neck.

It had been growing dark, and as we came out into the open again a bugle began to call back and forth through the dusk. Men hurried to their

tents to form at attention, and I supposed they were showing how quickly they could answer an alarm signal, but when they were all at their stations and you could see the rows standing stiff and still, far back through the trees, they suddenly broke into the deep bass chanting of the evening prayer. The Russian's religion is always very near. The old *izvoschik* jogging round the corner in his cab, the woman opposite you in the crowded trolley with a lap full of bundles, cross themselves at the sight of some distant church; the soldier, munching his black bread on the station platform, crosses himself before he picks up his rifle and gallops after his train—the unseen and mysterious is always hovering just beneath the surfaces of every-day.

The prayer went rising and falling through the pines in one of those sweet, half-melancholy chants which Russians learn as soon as they know anything. There is no artificial music in the Russian church and the diapason of the priest and the voices of choir and congregation take the place of our organ. I have heard two sleepy-looking men and a couple of wispy girls in one of the Kremlin churches chant with such a carrying rhythm that you would be sure, listening from the other side of the church, that some sort of instrument was accompanying them. Spread out in the twilight, the men could not sing together perfectly, but these very broken

waves of song, rising and falling through the forest, had their own impressiveness. Every now and then, along the lines, a soldier would bow low as people do in the Russian church whenever the feeling strikes them, crossing himself with a wide swinging motion as he bowed.

"Save Thy people and bless all Thou hast given them. . . ."
"Give our Tsar Nicholas victory over our enemies and preserve him under the sign of Thy cross. . . ."

The chant ended, and then—for this was a special evening—the band crashed in again, and the mounting chords of the Russian hymn soared up through the pines.

II

During the night our train ran up to the north of Molodetchno, and next morning we had a glimpse of the curious amphibious warfare which had been going on here for a year in this country of lakes and marshes.

At Lake Narotch, to which we drove along a corduroy road, the lines were intrenched on the opposite shores; in the winter there had been fighting on the ice, motor-boats were used occasionally now, and barbed-wire entanglements and even trenches had been built in the water. It was into this neighborhood that the German cavalry pushed after the fall of Brest-Litovsk in a daring attempt to

cut the Russian communications, which failed, so the officer with us said, only by a day. As it was, the Germans were turned back and half of them destroyed—"a very interesting operation," he said. He was a big, handsome, thoughtful-looking young fellow with hair growing low above wide-apart, preoccupied eyes. He spoke several languages and examined prisoners. I asked him how far he had got in the first big advance in 1914. "All the way to Cracow," he said.

We looked at the German lines through periscopes near the shore of the lake, saw a few shrapnel-shells burst above them, then went back to see a Russian crew send up their observation balloon. This curious monster, held down by ropes and sand-bags, was swimming there in the trees, just below their tops, exactly like a big pike loafing in the lily-pads. They towed him out into the open, where the cable was attached to a drum on a motor —made in America, by the way—the sand-bags cast off, then the crew barked their "*Zdrava djelaiem!*" and up he went. The captain tooted on a little horn when the balloon was high enough, and after what seemed like a long wait a faint, answering toot came back. We tried the telephone down which the observer gives his corrections of artillery fire, and the big sausage was hauled down and sent up again several times with great expedition.

Another regiment, whose history went back to 1805, and which had also just come from the trenches, had a field-day that afternoon and did for us in fun what they had just been doing in earnest—fired trench bombs, went through skirmish-drill with mounted infantry, and had some particularly interesting practice with mitrailleuse fire. A pine board, one side of which had been cut into a series of teeth about six inches apart, was set up lengthwise on the ground about fifty yards away, a machine-gun turned on it, and all these teeth mowed off just as a New York street-cleaner washes snow down the asphalt with a fire-hose. While examining the targets, I noticed that the steel casing of some of the bullets had split and twisted into the same shapes generally pointed out to civilians as the result of explosive bullets. Nothing is needed generally to make the modern high-speed bullet look as if it had been blown apart except its own speed and a bone.

Then, to the music of two concertinas, they danced while we voted on the winner. Some, with the squatting and kicking out of one boot after another, were like the slap-dash Russian dancing one occasionally sees at home; one man turned handsprings, fell flat, and flopped full length on his stomach like a crocodile, all in time; and one or two, with their Mongol faces, vague smiles, slightly

slanting eyes half closed, and the strange, soft indirections of their twists and turns, came out of Asia somewhere, though one knew not where.

There was tea, and when we reached the automobiles the whole regiment seemed to have gathered there. The band was there, too, and in honor of their allies struck up "God Save the King." Officers and guests came to salute and so stood during the English anthem, the "Marseillaise," the regimental song, and the Russian hymn, whereupon the whole multitude broke into the sustained "ra-ra-ra-ing" of the Russian cheer. To this roar and under hundreds of curious eyes we went through the usual hand-shaking, returned to the automobiles, and scattering salutes from side to side, whirled down through the regiment.

The next day we were to spend with some Kuban Cossacks, and during the night ran back to Minsk and thence southward on the Brest-Litovsk line almost to Baranovichi. The Germans held Baranovichi, and shrapnel puffs were cracking all about a German aeroplane as the motors left the station.

They toiled through the mud, past a camp of reserves, and finally bounded over a rise and down into a wide, shallow bowl of plain. Two little dots in the distance suddenly woke up, and two Cossack outposts who had probably been waiting for us for hours, for we were half a day late, flung themselves

on their horses and galloped toward us. The chauffeur of the first machine motioned with his gantlet, with the same bored gesture he would have used in a city street, and the Cossacks, bringing down their knouts and flinging their horses about with what should have been a magnificent gesture, fled down the road.

The only thing that dimmed its magnificence, for they rode beautifully, was the invention of the automobile and the cruel and cynical ease with which these soulless contraptions of steel and gas only purred a bit heavier and were always at their heels. Horses and riders doubled up every now and then and leaped like greyhounds, rifles bumping on the men's shoulders, and the motors purred and snorted lazily after—two ages and two civilizations racing there down the soggy road.

One felt something of this sort all the rest of that brief afternoon, as if one had slipped back almost to the time of Riepin's picture of "The Cossack's Reply," or back, at any rate, to a day when war was every man's business and a matter of riding and singing and drinking and running off with enemy princesses, instead of huddling in a trench waiting to be squashed by unthinking shells.

We rolled into a shabby little thatched village and stopped at a farmhouse gate, where already a bright-eyed little officer in a long, wine-colored

Cossack coat with white cartridge-cases across the chest, curved sword, and dagger, came out to greet us. He was as keen as a race-horse—a true colonel of Cossacks in every inch of his slim muscular shape, from his rakish Astrakhan hat down to the toes of his soft boots, if there ever was one.

They had been waiting for hours, and both of us had had lunch, but hospitality would permit no mention of this, and we were promptly ushered in to begin another long dinner at four in the afternoon. No abandoned country house here, nor the amenities of a corps headquarters—only a villager's cottage swarming with flies, and a welcome fairly to blow your hat off.

Hardly had we sat down when the little colonel was on his feet, firing off a speech of welcome in such a staccato Russian that even our Russian companions could scarce understand it. At the end he flung up his glass with a "ra-ra-ra-ra!" rapped out in one elongated syllable. Instantly the whole roomful of officers joined in, and this cheering continued for ten or fifteen seconds, the little colonel coming in with another of his "ra-ra-ra-ras!" like a whip, every time it seemed to show signs of dying down. Meanwhile, fifteen or twenty tall troopers had gathered in the yard outside the open windows, and as soon as there was a lull they began to sing the song with which the Cossack welcomes his guest

and asks that God be with him, with its plaintive, many-times-repeated refrain:

"*Allah verdie! Al-lah' verdie!*"

The Cossacks differ from most Russians in that they have been treated as an essentially military part of the population, and in return for land grants and certain other privileges, have been subject to military service the greater part of their lives. This fact and their skill as horsemen have given them most of the jobs of rough policing in peace times and a reputation outside of Russia which the individual Cossack by no means deserves. These men were grave, upstanding, handsome fellows, farmers or cattlemen in peace times, and very much such a regiment of rough riders as general conscription would call out in our own ranch country. The men outside had scarcely finished their "*Allah verdie*" when the colonel's aide, very much such another live wire, struck up a song. They had made humorous verses for most of the staff and even one for the guests in which "*Pressa*" rhymed with "*Progressa,*" and the aide sang the verses, the whole roomful joined in the chorus, at the end of which everybody jumped up and drank the health in native red Caucasus wine which they had brought in old-fashioned style in skins from home.

The soldiers outside started to dance, and the

nimble aide promptly hopped out of the window, beckoning after him another officer. They motioned the men away and themselves began dancing, the aide slashing the air in front of his partner's face and all about him with two ferocious-looking daggers. This partner was surely one of the handsomest men that ever wore a uniform—tall, with the fine shoulders and long, slender waist which the Cossack uniform sets off at its best, a high-bred face with drooping mustaches, wide-apart, dreamy eyes, and such a slumbering-tiger way of vaguely smiling, twisting, and turning in his soft boots as even Mrs. Elinor Glyn could scarcely have imagined in her loftiest flights.

In the middle of the dinner we received a visit from the general commanding the Caucasian Corps, of which this was one of the units. He was an elderly, little man, not a Cossack by birth, who had become so fascinated with them and their uniform that he had been made a sort of honorary Cossack, so to say. The cheers and toasts began again with his arrival, and then the health of the guests was drunk by countries, and one of the Englishmen, feeling very properly that the guests should do something, started "Tipperary." All the Westerners joined in, and the song was received by the Cossacks with wild satisfaction. Then we had our photographs taken, there was more dancing, and

even the colonel himself, not to be outdone, jumped into the circle and bounded about like a panther in his light, soft boots.

It was nearly sundown now, but they were not going to let us go without some of the long programme they had planned, and as the motors started they jumped on their horses and, forming ahead of us and behind us, escorted us to the edge of the village, where a smooth hillside rose from the wide, unfenced road. Here we passed them in a sort of informal review. They trotted through various formations, scattered and galloped off as if on scout duty, then gathered about a hundred yards down the road.

Then, one by one, yelling and at full gallop, they raced past us, standing on their saddles, picking up hats from the ground, flinging themselves off their horses and, backward or forward, on again. There were all the things one sees in a Wild West show, only done not by two or three riders, but by a whole squadron, and each man in full uniform with a long, tight-waisted overcoat, a heavy sabre underneath it, a dagger strapped outside, and a rifle bumping on his shoulders. There were several falls, one man's horse rolled over with him, and he was carried away, but nobody bothered about that.

The sun had gone by now, and the twilight held a sort of afterglow that made one think of the light

of the White Nights. Against it, the church on the hills behind us, with its beet-shaped domes, stood out as if cut from black cardboard, while it still glowed on the horsemen riding into it and on the barefooted peasant women in their red skirts and white kerchiefs looking on, the yellow fields and the dust-colored, thatched village now turning to purple.

Little spirals of smoke rose from its roofs and spread out flat in the still, damp air, with its smell of wheat stubble, and above the meadows and in the hollows of the low hills mists began to gather like cotton-wool. And in this luminous stillness with war scarcely more real than some ancient chronicle, the horsemen formed again down the road, and together, yelling and waving their sabres, came flying by at the full charge.

They formed in front and behind us again as the motors started and so trotted along with us, singing as they rode. On the brow of the last hill they drew up at our right on a rising bit of ground. The colonel, flinging his bridle-wise horse this way and that, shook hands with his guests, and then they all stood in their high saddles and cheered as we drove away.

It was dark when the motor-lamps, flashing up a black tunnel in the trees, lit a courtyard and the front of what looked like another country house.

It had been, it seemed, a monastery, and was now a corps headquarters, full of maps and telephone-wires, orderlies and officers. We were ushered into a long room with a table diagonally across it, set for tea, and received by the chief of staff. He sat down at the head, and in the most charmingly informal yet authoritative fashion talked now in English, now in French, with now a word or two in Russian, about the war in general and their special part in it.

He was thoroughly Russian, and in his big, good-natured, lounging fashion suggested one of those bullet-headed surgeons one sometimes meets, who is careless about everything except his particular technique. With his arms on the table and now and then running a hand through his close-cropped hair, he described, with wash drawings showing every bush and tree of the enemy's line, what they had been doing lately. There had been a "brisk little brush" here, that place was "rather interesting," and then he spoke of one of their younger officers. He had started in as lieutenant, gone right on to lieutenant-colonel, and received all the orders, including the English Military Cross. "He got that for defending a machine-gun. They had held on until help came, all his men were killed or wounded, and we found him unconscious, with his arms clasped around the gun, and eleven bayonet

wounds. He got over that and went in again; he went through everything, that boy, and then"—he tapped his forehead with his forefinger, "in a skirmish—a stupid little skirmish—and not even in the front line! . . ."

The candles flickered in the dark monastery room, orderlies waited against the wall to fill our glasses with tea, and we drank a good deal of it, for we expected to spend the night in the trenches and not get back until four in the morning. That was the plan, but something happened—some whisper over the field-telephone, some rumor in the wind—and without quite knowing what was up, we were saying good night and starting back for the train.

A full moon as big as a house shone through the trees, and once out of them and between the fields again, we drove into a blue sea of moonlight. Thick scarfs of mist lay along the pines, fog blanketed the lowlands, and moonlight and mist together made the very air blue and turned into a scene from the theatre the train of armored motor-cars lurching past us, the transport-wagon hub deep in mud, with a crew working round it with lanterns, and a stretch of misty pines with phantom soldiers round their little fires.

We were to have gone farther south next day to a busier army, but something was in the air—pos-

sibly there were too many of us—and next morning the train was on its way back to Minsk and thence to Petrograd. Of the Russian fighting-machine in action, or of how this particular part of it might stand up to its work, we had seen little. But of Russians themselves, Russian faces, hospitality, and recuperative power, we had seen a good deal.

These armies, with everything they needed, apparently, in men, food, ammunition, and confidence, were the same which, just a year before, had been falling back through this same country at the rate of thirty miles a day. The question every one was asking then—could the Russians come back?—was already answered in Bukowina and in the droves of prisoners pouring back through Kiev. But it was answered in other, and perhaps as significant, ways, along this comparatively quiet, central front. Some of the rifles we had seen came, very likely, from little basement machine-shops in Petrograd side streets; some of the shells, perhaps, from some Moscow cotton-mill, laboriously turning, on lathes set up since last summer, or formerly used for something else, a few score a day. The farmyard hospitals, the stores and hospital trains, were the work not merely of the army, as this is known in peace times, but of unions of rural governments, of cities, of committees of employers and workmen—all sorts of volunteer organiza-

tions. One of the significant results of the war was the practice it had given Russians in working together—a team-work destined to have its effect, not merely on the problems of the moment, but on those of the future as well.

IV

THE MOSCOW ART THEATRE

THE theatre itself was shallow and comfortable, a thoroughly modern auditorium, very different from the huge, old-fashioned horseshoes of the Russian imperial theatres, and not unlike those which have sprung up like mushrooms in New York in recent years. But the audience was the other side of the earth from Broadway.

As we took our seats and looked round they seemed, themselves, as interesting as a play. They were young, nobody was "dressed," and all seemed immensely alert, curious, and alive. There were students—boys in belted blouses and girls with short hair—officers in all sorts of uniforms. There were faces which might have been those of Swedes, Spaniards, Germans, Turks, or even remoter Orientals—that lack of uniformity characteristic of Russian theatre audiences; surprising, sometimes almost eccentric, contours, as if the modelling were not finished, the type not yet set.

About them all, however, was the air of having great capacity for feeling, for being moved by anything beautiful, tragic, mysterious—any intense

reality. There were yearning eyes, smouldering, melancholy, mysterious eyes, eyes that suggested anything but champagne and lobsters, or any cut-and-dried or merely fashionable ways of thinking. They were intellectually ready for anything. They might or mightn't like it, but there was nothing they would reject offhand merely because it was unusual or "not done."

Then the curtain rose on Chekhov's "The Three Sisters," and at once, and during the first lines, I was conscious of one of the most vivid impressions I ever had in a theatre. It was the sensation (and the fact that one understood only a word here and there seemed to make no difference) not so much of getting into a play as of getting into Russia. And not merely an instant of Russian life, cut out from the rest and intensified, but into the whole stream of influences, inherited and otherwise, which had produced this family, and out of which their lives must flow. Here it is, one felt at once. This is Russia; this is the real thing.

Just how this effect, to which author, players, stage-setting, and the collective enthusiasm of the audience itself all contributed, was brought about is not easy to explain. There was nothing unique or startling in the stage-setting—the living-room and part of the veranda of a comfortable house in a Russian provincial town, much such a roomy old

"The Three Sisters"—Germanova, at the left, who played the middle sister in Chekhov's play; Zdanova, the younger sister, and Knipper (Mme. Chekhov) at the right, who played Masha.
Mme. Chekhov is seen here as she appeared in "Autumn Violins."

frame house as you would find in Columbus, Ohio, or Evansville, Ind. Interiors just as realistic have not infrequently been built up around the bathos with which Mr. Belasco has made his fame.

Nor has Mme. Knipper (the widow of Chekhov) nor Miss Germanova, nor Miss Zdanova any unique personal magnetism—the sort of spell with which a Bernhardt, for instance, hypnotizes almost any spectator. They did not, indeed, give one the feeling of being actresses at all in the sense of belonging to any queer foreign world composed of billboards, bunk, and photographs in the Sunday papers. Evidently, these sisters were regular people. It was as if one had entered a family composed, let us say, of Mrs. Wharton, Josephine Daskam Bacon, and any pretty, wide-awake, intelligent young cousin of yours, just out of Smith or Bryn Mawr and a little at a loss, back in her own home-town, to know what to do with herself.

The audience looked into a living-room behind which, in a sort of enlarged alcove, was the dining-room, and, at the left, the end of the veranda outside of the house. The elder sister sat on a sort of island divan in the middle of the room, reading; the other two, facing the audience, stood by the veranda railing looking out on a fine May morning.

Masha, the elder sister, played by Mme. Knipper,

was in black, and she sat bolt upright, her fine, severe, rather disillusioned profile bent unsmiling on her book. Through the greater part of the scene, while other characters came and went, this rather sinister figure remained, a silent silhouette—and this was typical of the methods of the theatre—paying no attention to what was going on about her. One could not know, of course, that she had been married while very young to a well-meaning, commonplace boy whom she had now outgrown, but one did not need to know it. Here, evidently, was a sensitive, high-strung woman suffering in some way hard to change—that was plain enough.

Of the two on the porch, Olga, the middle sister, was in dark blue, a color in itself suggesting the middle position that she, as a teacher in the high school, held between the unhappy married sister and Irina, who, in a white summer dress, was smiling dreamily at the morning, all her life before her.

For a moment this picture, the dark silhouette, the day-dreaming figure of the youngest sister, the more serious Olga, was held, and then the mood in which they were living began, as it were, to speak through Olga's soliloquy:

It's just a year since father died last May the 5th, on your name day, Irina. It was very cold then, and snowing. I thought I would never survive it, and you were in a dead faint. And now a year has gone by, and we are already

thinking about it without pain, and you are wearing a white dress and your face is happy. [*Clock strikes twelve.*] And the clock struck just the same way then. [*Pause.*] I remember that there was music at the funeral, and they fired a volley in the cemetery. He was a general in command of a brigade, but there were few people present. Of course, it was raining then, raining hard, and snowing. . . . [*Several officers, friends of the family, enter the dining-room at the rear.*] It's so warm to-day that we can keep the windows open, though the birches are not yet in flower. Father was put in command of a brigade, and he rode out of Moscow with us eleven years ago. I remember perfectly that it was early in May and that everything in Moscow was flowering then. It was warm, too, everything was bathed in sunshine. Eleven years have gone, and I remember everything as if we rode out only yesterday. Oh, God! When I awoke this morning and saw all the light and the spring, joy entered my heart, and I longed passionately to go home. . . . [*Masha,* ABSORBED in her book, whistles softly.] Don't whistle, Masha. How can you! [*Pause.*] I'm always having headaches from having to go to the high school every day and then teach till evening. Strange thoughts come to me, as if I were already an old woman. And really, during these four years that I have been working here, I have been feeling as if every day my strength and youth have been squeezed out of me, drop by drop. And only one desire grows and gains in strength . . .

IRINA. To go away to Moscow. To sell the house, drop everything here, and go to Moscow. . . .

There you have the manner, and indeed the whole story, so far as there is a story, of Chekhov's "Three Sisters." Every one knows girls like these, girls who have come back home from college or a

year abroad, have not married nor found anything to do. Their dissatisfaction is often a real enough tragedy, but it would scarcely occur to the American writer to make a play out of it. He might make a play showing how such a girl went to New York and went to the bad, or stayed at home and cured her blues by starting a Mary Elizabeth candy-shop or reforming the board of aldermen. But to make a play out of mere mooning would seem to him and to the average American spectator absurd.

It would seem so because such behavior, though common enough, is absurd in itself. There is no reason why the sisters should not go to Moscow, nothing to prevent their packing up and taking the next train except the fatalistic Russian habit of saying that things come as they must come and all is for the best. There are many influences—and they were stronger when Chekhov was writing than now—political, geographical, and otherwise, to produce this habit of resignation, and a stranger feels them even after a few months of Russia. It is unnecessary to go into them here. It is enough to recall that this habit of inaction combined with a great deal of philosophizing exists, to understand the effect which such work as Chekhov's has on a Russian audience.

The tragedy in this play, as in "The Cherry

Orchard," is not in what the characters do, but in the fact that they do nothing. And as played by the Art Theatre company, with their affectionate care for every realistic and suggestive detail, it takes a Russian audience squarely by the throat. They see their own souls turned inside out, and the whole theatre is hushed for a moment when the curtain goes down finally with nothing changed, and Irina, looking ahead, Russian fashion, toward some vague, bright millennium, still wonders what all their present suffering is for: "If we could only know, if we could only know! . . ."

Questioning like this—"What are we here for?" "Why?" "Where?"—comes very naturally in Russia. There is something in the air, in the vast empty spaces, the hard climate, slow getting about, the dead, unyielding walls of government repression—again, I speak of the Russia of yesterday—which, apart from an inborn mysticism, induces such thinking. The individual is turned in on himself just as in such an atmosphere as that of New York, for instance, he is turned the other way, and becomes a sort of child at a three-ring circus, too dazzled and fascinated by infinite possibilities, by the glittering hullabaloo of life, to bother about what it all means.

And this, of course, must have its effect on the state of mind in which people go to the theatre. A

Russian audience, or at any rate the sort of Russian audience which crowds the Art Theatre night after night, is more interested in imagination and less in mere novelty and theatric invention than ours—in something which will deepen and make more rich and understandable the life they already are living.

Of the acting it is perhaps enough for the moment to say that it aims to get rid of the usual stage-tricks and to reproduce the illusion of life itself. Needless to say the artificialities and false accents which accompany the star system are avoided by such a company, so intent on the business in hand, that of creating a certain atmosphere, that they will not even permit the spectators to disturb it by applause. One example from "The Three Sisters" will suggest the general tendency of the stage management. Andrey, the brother of the sisters, is married to a plump, empty-headed dumpling of a woman who, before marriage, thought only of clothes and coquetry, and after it is ready to sacrifice the whole family to what she thinks are the needs of her innumerable progeny. Andrey's is one of those serio-comic tragedies—the young man of imagination and promise smothered in a domesticity of his own making.

In the last act, when the regiment is moving to another town, and the colonel, who has brought the

elder sister a belated glimpse of happiness, is saying good-by probably for the last time, when Irina's lover is killed in a duel and the shreds of hope to which the sisters have been clinging all seem cut and their curious passive tragedy nearing its climax —though, of course, Chekhov-like, there is no climax —in and out of this scene, the wretched and rather absurd Andrey moves, slowly pushing a squeaking baby-carriage.

"What is become of my past," he says once, "and where is it? I used to be young, happy, clever; I used to be able to think and have clever ideas; the present and the future seemed full of hope. Why do we, almost before we have begun to live, become dull, uninteresting, lazy, useless? . . . This town has already been in existence for two hundred years, and it has a hundred thousand inhabitants, not one of whom is in any way different from the others. There never has been, now or at any other time, a single leader of men, a single scholar, an artist, a man of even the slightest eminence who might arouse envy or passionate desire to be imitated. They only eat, drink, sleep, and then they die. . . . More people are born, and also eat, drink, sleep, and so as not to go silly from boredom they try to make life many-sided with their beastly backbiting, vodka, cards, and litigation. Wives deceive their husbands, and the husbands lie and pretend they see nothing, and the evil influence oppresses the children, and the divine spark in them is extinguished, and they become just as pitiful corpses and just as much like one another as their fathers and mothers." . . .

So the brother speaks, but several times he and the squeaking baby-carriage only trail across the

scene, like a musical motif—a typical example of their method of giving symbolistic meaning to the most natural facts.

Another of that week's repertoire (no play, however successful, is produced for more than two nights in succession) was "Autumn Violins," a piece more conventional, about a woman growing old—just entering the autumn of her own life—compelled to see a man she had loved fall in love with and marry her own daughter. The first scene was played in a bright living-room through the tall windows of which the spectators looked out on a landscape in the height of its autumn coloring. Just before the curtain fell a single autumn leaf came drifting down past the windows. There was a similar accompaniment throughout the action, and the last ironical scene, in which she said good-by to the young people starting away on their honeymoon, was played in the same room, through the windows of which the audience now looked out on bare branches and snow.

Chekhov's "Cherry Orchard," Maeterlinck's "Blue Bird," an ingenious arrangement of Dickens's "Cricket on the Hearth," and Gorky's "Lower Depths" were also played that week—"The Cricket on the Hearth" at the Studio, a tiny theatre used by the younger members of the organization as a sort of experimental stage.

The Gorky play, at least in part, was played in New York about ten years ago by the German company at the Irving Place Theatre under the title "An Asylum for the Night." It is a series of character sketches strung on a slight thread of action taking place in one of the Moscow underground lodging-houses where human driftwood of all sorts—beggars, pilgrims, drunken workmen, a woman dying of tuberculosis, a broken-down actor, a decayed nobleman—huddle for the night. It is stuff of which everything or nothing can be made according to the acting and stage managing and the success with which a thousand little details are thought out and merged into a harmonious whole. It is just the thing, naturally, for the imaginative naturalism of the Art Theatre, and to see this piece played there—all these perfectly realized types immersed in an indescribably Russian atmosphere of good nature, slovenliness, and vague philosophizing, sense of sin, of failure, and yet of faith—is, within the short space of an evening, almost to have lived through years of that side of Russian life itself.

The production of "The Blue Bird," while both fresher and more vigorous than any I have seen in the West, differed less, of course, than essentially Russian pieces. In one way it was a great improvement. There was no attempt to have the parts of

Tiltil and Mitil played by children. They were played by grown-ups small enough to make up successfully and mature enough to give the lines the understanding they deserve. The Art Theatre has two players extraordinarily fitted for such parts. Miss Durasova can play a boy's part with all of Miss Adams's charm and none of her mannerisms and mawkishness, and little Miss Giatzintova can think like an accomplished artist and, in some bewildering fashion, look exactly like a little ten-year-old girl. In the scene of the Unborn Children, where grown women, dressed in a sort of nun's costume, represented the children's souls, the effect was less happy, I thought, than in its representation here.

One dramatic form in which, so far as I know, the Art Theatre is the pioneer, is that of presenting novels not in a dramatization but literally. That is to say, instead of turning over a good book to a hack dramatist to be turned into a bad play, the dialogue is played literally, without change, and the narrative filled in by stage managing or by reading passages from the book itself. So huge and shapeless a mass as Dostoyevski's "The Brothers Karamazoff" has been played with great success, and the same method was followed with "The Cricket on the Hearth."

The Studio Theatre, in which this was given, is a real little theatre, without footlights and with a

slanting tier of seats somewhat like those in a college lecture-room. The audience is made up mostly of relatives and friends, and it is not always easy for outsiders to get tickets. The house was darkened for a few moments before the play began, and out of this darkness at one side of the stage there appeared a glow and in it a benign, Christmasy-looking old gentleman seated by a fireplace, his face lit by the fire. "The kettle began it," he said, smiling toward the audience with the air of one telling stories; then went on repeating the introductory chapter, or at least parts of it, just as written. The chirping of a cricket and the curious bubbling of a teakettle accompanied him, and presently he faded out and the curtain went up on the interior of the cottage of John and Mary Periwinkle. There were four scenes, the first and last in the cottage, the other two in the toymaker's shop, and all played with such spontaneous charm and so smoothed together that a stranger would have had no feeling that the whole had not been originally written as a play. It was not, compared with Chekhov, a wildly exciting evening, but it gave this audience of Russians, many of whom could not have read the original, a surprisingly accurate notion of the feeling and flavor of Dickens's story.

None of these plays, it will be observed, are of the sort to which one goes merely for amusement

in the sense that one goes to a good melodrama—a perfectly sound sort of entertainment in itself—they all meet the demand, not necessarily Russian, for something spiritually nourishing, something that does not merely pass over the skin like a cold shower-bath but warms a person up inside, stays with him and broadens the consciousness of life with which he already starts. Yet the Art Theatre is sold out every night, even when plays are presented which have been in the repertoire for years, and this without advertising or any sort of exploitation except the mere announcement of dates and titles.

Two little experiences of my own will suggest the theatre's point of view toward newspapers and the public. The Art Theatre has no press-agent, but there is a secretary, a young Greek, Mr. Lykiardopulos, who makes translations—he had, interestingly enough, just translated "The Great Divide"—and now and then deigns to meet dramatic reporters and give them a little news. He received the announcement that I contemplated writing something about the theatre with complete calm, and when I rather lavishly explained that I should, of course, pay for seats but would be grateful if he could assist me in getting them, said he would see what could be done.

He went to the box-office, pushed through the

line, spoke with the ticket-seller, and, handing me tickets for several performances, said: "Twenty-six rubles, please." I spoke about photographs of the company—would it not be possible to come some day and take a few informal snapshots? The secretary said he would see. When I called next day he reported that he was sorry, but his colleagues said that photographs of themselves in costume could be obtained at the regular dealers in such things—their personal lives were their own, and they did not care to have pictures taken.

And yet, with this complete independence, their theatre pays not only its expenses, which now amount to about three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars, but a profit of between twenty-five thousand dollars and forty thousand dollars to the shareholders, who are the players themselves or others directly employed in the theatre. It must not be assumed, however, that this was done in a minute nor without a lot of hard work. Even the Russian public had to be educated and a great lot of experimenting done before the theatre's position was thus established. It was started in 1897, not, like our ill-fated New Theatre, as a sort of American millionaires' adaptation of the endowed state theatre, nor by an owner-manager like Mr. Ames's Little Theatre, but by the workers themselves. Its beginning was more after the fashion

of the Washington Square Players and the other amateur companies which have popped up of late years in New York.

Two men, Nemirovitch-Dantchenko, a Moscow dramatist and dramatic critic, and Constantine Stanislavsky, a member of a rich Moscow family who had done a good deal of amateur acting, organized a stock company. Stanislavsky is still the company's principal actor and teacher, and the theatre is often spoken of under his name. Several Moscow merchants subscribed enough—only about fifteen thousand dollars—for a start; a barn on the country-place of one of the members was turned into a theatre, and here, cooking their own meals, making their own costumes and scenery, the company rehearsed five plays, "Tsar Feodor Ivanovitch," a seventeenth-century historical play by Count Alexis K. Tolstoy, Sophocles's "Antigone," Goldoni's "La Locandiera," Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice," and Hauptmann's "Hannele." The theatre opened on October 14, 1898, with "Tsar Feodor Ivanovitch," still a part of the repertoire. "Hannele" was forbidden by the censor, the other plays were not successful, and Chekhov's "Sea Gull," which had already failed at the Imperial Theatre in Petrograd, was finally produced as a sort of forlorn hope. It was a tremendous success, and a sea gull, now on the curtain

and on the programme, became the emblem of the Art Theatre. It was Chekhov's plays which really made the Art Theatre, as it was the Art Theatre which made Chekhov a dramatist.

Although the first year was a great artistic success, it finished with a deficit of about twenty thousand dollars, which was met, as were the deficits of the succeeding five years, by several Moscow merchants. Ibsen was produced in these years, with Hauptmann, Gorky, and Chekhov, and in 1902 a music-hall was remodelled into the present modern theatre.

During the revolution of 1905, while the theatre was closed, the company toured Germany and Austria, and a few years later organized on their present basis—a more or less co-operative stock company of one hundred actors, actresses, and students, with another hundred musicians, scene-shifters, wig-makers, etc.

The acting has gone through several phases. At first it was anything to smash convention. The players even turned their backs to the audience sometimes, not for any reason, but just to show that they could. In a parody of the Art Theatre's methods at "The Crooked Looking-Glass" in Petrograd, a seat with a high back was turned away from the audience so that the actor sitting in it was hidden altogether, and again, a chorus of realistic

barnyard sounds—barking, crowing, bleating, etc.—completely drowned out the actors.

Realizing presently that naturalism could be run into the ground, the company swung to the opposite pole and gave a series of symbolistic plays in which every-day appearances were carefully avoided. This led to a sort of merging of the two, to the symbolical realism in which its better plays are now presented. The secretary, in telling me of their theories of acting, spoke repeatedly of their endeavor to "live into" a part, and he said that when occasionally they did take on a professional actor from the provinces, the first thing he had to do was to unlearn his stage-tricks. Each play was rehearsed an incredible number of times, I do not recall just how many, and it had several dress rehearsals—before a handful, before half a house, three-quarters of a house, and so on—before it was finally offered to the public.

The success of this Russian theatre gives new interest and importance to the many efforts, more or less serious, Americans are making to escape from the banality and commercialism of our own stage. The various drama leagues showed the stirring of ideas, and the crop of little independent theatres which have sprung up in New York and elsewhere of late in which, sometimes, amateurs write and act their own plays, really constitutes

what might be called a "movement." Our theatre is ten times more alive than it was a generation ago, and the commercial success of one or two of these little experiments shows that Broadway can be beaten, after all.

There is further cheer in the fact that even the Russian public is not so regenerate as to feed entirely on such work as Chekhov's. During this same week in Moscow, at one of the other popular theatres, I saw a play by Artsybashev—with a conventional heroine, who loaded herself with clothes, jumped on sofas and off again, coiled and uncoiled, and continually kept breaking the picture to call attention to herself, in quite the approved Broadway style. Little girls with pigtails down their backs ran down the aisle to be nearer their idol as she bowed to the curtain-calls—after flirting in the play with every man and boy in sight she was righteously choked to death, though not soon enough, by her husband—and doubtless waited outside the stage door just as they do at home.

No, the course of true art does not run smooth in Russia any more than anywhere else, and the Russians have had a censorship to meet in addition to other troubles. It is not for us to imitate their most characteristic work. We are a different breed, too nervous and positive, too optimistic and impatient of results, to have any strong natural appetite for

such tragedies of inaction. We must express our own life and times in our own way, but these Russians have proved, at any rate, that a theatre may exist without newspapers or press-agents, and actors and actresses live as artistically free and self-respecting lives as painters and novelists.

V

A LOOK AT THE DUMA

THE place of representative government in the Russian scheme of things before the *coup d'état* of 1917, was suggested by the location of the Imperial Duma in the national capital. One did not find the Duma under a dome in the heart of Petrograd. It was far away from that vast, cold, impressive square—in itself a symbol of autocratic power—round which are grouped the red piles of the Winter Palace, Foreign Office, and Ministry of War.

The people's representatives met in a low, white building—the Taurida Palace—some distance from the centre of town. There was a pleasant park and lake behind it, where members might stroll when debate grew tiresome—it suggested a parliament less than an art gallery or museum of history. And the Russian deputy, jammed into one of Petrograd's crowded trolley-cars, or jogging away from the Nevski and down past the neighborhood of embassies and legations, behind some drowsy *izvoschik* in a blue overcoat stuffed like a Santa Claus,

could scarcely enjoy the sensations which inflate the chest of an American congressman, marching for the first time down Pennsylvania Avenue toward the great gray dome of the National Capitol.

He could scarcely nourish the illusion that he was about to ascend Olympus and look down on a nation looking up to him. He knew that the Duma had been "granted" only a few years before and was not something created in the beginning by the people themselves, that it had been dissolved whenever it grew too obstreperous, and that at any time its sessions might be stopped again. It might pass bills, but the Upper House, the Council of Empire, half of whose members were appointed by the Tsar, could always kill them, and, although it might question ministers about their actions, these actions were beyond its control.

It was, to be sure, a representative assembly, with rights and privileges under a constitution, a place in which the people's delegates might talk, criticise the government, and get their criticisms in print. But it had led, since its enthusiastic start in the spring of 1905, a rather drab and disappointing existence, and about the best that could be said for it, even a few months before the overturning of the old régime, was that it was a symbol, and sometimes a searchlight, and helped to start along the road of political thinking and action a people

used to taking orders and having their political thinking done for them.

I talked one day with Professor Paul Miliukov, Minister of Foreign Affairs under the new government, and before the revolution leader of the Constitutional Democrats, or Cadets, as they are called. Professor Miliukov knows his own country, about whose history he has lectured and written; he is an authority on the Balkans, and especially Bulgaria, whose university at Sofia he helped to organize. He was one of the founders of the Constitutional Democratic party, and has been, perhaps, the most consistently active worker in the Russian liberal movement. He gave a series of lectures in Chicago in 1903, speaks English fluently and is familiar with our point of view—is, in short, a gentleman with whom an American feels at once and agreeably at home. I asked Professor Miliukov if it might not properly be said that Russia would win in the war no matter what happened. He smiled at the "whatever happens" and remarked that they were not indifferent to military results.

"If you mean win in our eternal war—yes."

Russia had already won much in this "eternal war"—the struggle, that is to say, toward liberty, toward all those ideal ends to which even constitutional government is a more or less experimental step.

In the Duma itself, the war had brought antagonistic elements together just as it had brought together hitherto antagonistic or indifferent classes of the Russian people. Reactionary deputies, visiting the front, saw for themselves how necessary was the work of the Union of Zemstvos and other volunteer citizens' organizations in supplying the army with munitions, clothing, food, and hospital supplies. They saw that the government could not, or would not handle, the situation alone, and that had the people not stepped in on their own initiative the army would never have recovered as it did recover from the defeats of 1915. Nearly everybody saw this, and the hinderances that the government kept on interposing to what was obviously patriotic and important work, and the support which the army gave to these citizens' unions, strengthened them in their independence.

The war had been an education to millions of peasants and given them lessons in keeping clean and fit, if nothing else. Raked in from their villages, they had travelled hundreds, sometimes thousands of miles, to the training-camps or barracks, often in the larger cities, and then travelled farther on to the front. They had met all sorts of other Russians, and in Poland, Galicia, and Austria seen methods of living and farming more advanced than those they were used to at home. When

wounded, they were sent back to Petrograd, perhaps, or Moscow, or Kiev, and when well enough to walk out-of-doors, saw the city crowds and sights —parks, churches, even the paintings and statues in the museums, with some bright little volunteer Red Cross nurse to mother them and explain things. Outside of Russia, meanwhile, millions of supposedly educated people in the western world were opening their eyes to spiritual qualities in the Russian people to which they had hitherto given little thought.

All these things, and particularly the practice in national team-work which had come to the non-bureaucratic, intelligent middle class, would have reacted on the people's assembly even without a revolution. Even with it, however, it is just as well to keep in mind what the Duma has been, what it has had to fight, both from without and from its own inexperience, and to take into account the physical indolence and vagueness in practical things which accompany the speculative enthusiasm and spiritual fervor of Russians, before assuming that the millennium is going to be reached in a day.

The look of the Duma when I visited it, on various summer afternoons in 1916, was not unlike that of similar gatherings in our part of the world. The deputies sat at desks in a semicircular hall, lighted from above, with a president or speaker looking down on them from a desk a little above

the tribune into which each deputy ascended as he addressed the house. Reactionary delegates sat on the right, and the house grew more liberal from right to left through the moderate liberals of the centre to the Social Democrats of the extreme left. There were a dozen or more political groups, but nearly three-quarters of the four hundred and forty-two members acted together in the "Progressive *bloc*." This coalition occupied the centre of the house and included the Octobrists—so called from the Constitutionalist Manifesto of October, 1905—led by Mr. Guchkov, Minister of War in the new government; the Constitutional Democrats, or Cadets, the most active party in the house; and the Progressives, who sat between them.

There were a few peasant deputies with trousers tucked into their boots, and on the right several priests with hair falling on their shoulders, blue cassocks, and crosses on chains hung about their necks. Most of the other deputies wore conventional frock coats or business suits. Some, indeed, particularly in the centre of the house, were quite "western"—Mr. Maklakov, for instance, one of the Cadet leaders, and perhaps the best speaker in the house. He was introducing an interesting and important bill increasing the rights of peasants on one of the days when I visited the Duma. The

Priest Deputies to the Duma strolling beside the lake adjoining Taurida Palace.

A group of "Pristavs," who acted as ushers, vote collectors, etc., in the national Duma.

chamber was full that afternoon, as it always is when he speaks, several rather long-drawn-out discussions of what was happening in the cold-storage warehouses were abridged, and the deputies, most of whom had gone out for a glass of tea, Russian-fashion, before Maklakov's turn came, were all ears when the Cadet deputy ascended the tribune.

The Moscow lawyer, a youngish, middle-aged man, with a short beard, wore a blue sack suit and a negligee shirt with soft, turned-down collar held by a clasp pin. He had just come down from the visitors' gallery, where he had been pointing out the sights to two pretty ladies—one a famous Moscow beauty who had evidently come to hear him talk—and his whole manner was wide-awake, boyish, and full of informal charm. He spoke rapidly, with nervous, forceful gestures, the most characteristic of which was a quick jabbing with the left forefinger, and no attempt at formal oratory—much as if he were an American lawyer, or architect, or reform candidate for mayor, addressing a club of men he knew; anything not tame, prosy, or in a bureaucratic way cut-and-dried.

Mr. Maklakov might be described as a type of the westernized *intelligentsia*—a type very different from that which we generally think of as Russian at home. There were a good many of these brisk, youngish men in the forefront of things in Russia

at the moment, men not ordinarily in public affairs, but brought into them more or less through the volunteer committees formed to help the army. These men talked in frank, clean-cut fashion: if they said ten o'clock, they meant ten o'clock—or at least as near to it as a Russian could be expected to get—spoke freely of difficulties with the government; were, in short, people with whom one felt at once that one could, as we say, "do business."

Mr. Konovaloff, one of the Progressive deputies —the Progressives are a shade more "Right" than the Cadets—and Minister of Transportation in the new government, was another of these young men in politics. Mr. Konovaloff is of the third generation in a family of cotton-spinners not unlike the family whose Moscow cotton-mill I shall speak of presently. They, too, have their great mill, on the Volga, with model workrooms, workmen's barracks and cottages, hospitals and amusement places, and all the elaborate machinery for taking care of their employees in a similar semi-feudal fashion. His own part of the business—in addition to the mill itself the company has branch offices all over European and Asiatic Russia—he had practically given up for the time being in order to serve as vice-president of the War Industrial Committee.

This committee, formed when things looked bad

in 1915, endeavored principally to supply munitions just as the Union of Zemstvos aimed principally to supply food and clothes and assist the wounded. Representatives from all classes of Russian industry were on this committee under the presidency of the Octobrist leader, Mr. Guchkov, and there was a New York branch, one of the members of which was Mr. Peter Morosoff, part owner of the Moscow cotton-mill already referred to.

The Union of Zemstvos began its war work in a small way with the personal permission of the commander of the Eighth Army, and extended it until it had committees working on all the fronts. At first they tried only to help take care of wounded, and when I talked with Prince Lvoff's secretary they had fifty special sanitary trains, were maintaining one hundred and seventy-five thousand beds and making ready fifty thousand more. In the Moscow government alone they had sixty thousand beds, although most of these were outside the city, the city government itself looking out for most of those in the town. They did many other things. In one section of the front they were feeding two hundred thousand civilians, employed in digging trenches; the winter before they had sent two hundred thousand sheepskins to the Serbian army; they had had made thirty-five million linen suits for soldiers in hospitals. Discovering that a large

factory was making an absurd profit out of horseshoes, they arranged that this simple job should be attended to by concerns with simpler equipment whose overhead charges were less. The government kept insisting that the union's help wasn't needed, prohibited meetings for discussing necessary business, and insisted on dealing with the separate Zemstvos instead of with the union, but the union, knowing that it had the army behind it, went on with its work, nevertheless. The preparation which such experience gave for the final defiance of the government, and the Duma's refusal to dissolve, is obvious enough.

The Duma's spokesman in that dramatic moment, and its president, Rodzianko of Ekaterinoslav, is a very different type from brisk, rather westernized young Russians like Maklakov. Rodzianko is a Russian of Russians—in appearance, at least Mr. Chelknikov, mayor of Moscow before the *coup d'état,* is much such another man—big, easy-going giants, with deep voices and heavy wrists: bears of men, with no visible traces of the soft-handed Byzantine bureaucrat, and a size, slowness, and capacity for fighting, when driven to it, exactly like bears.

The Duma president, like most of the deputies, is a landowner—he has enormous estates down in the southern steppe country—and on the hot summer

Professor Paul Miliukov, leader of the Constitutional Democratic party and, after the coup d'état of 1917, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Rodzianko (at the right), President of the National Duma, and the Duma Vice-President on one of the porticos of Taurida Palace.

afternoon when I talked with him he was thinking, as many of his colleagues were, of the crops and getting home. The political earthquake was then only a few months away, but I doubt if he anticipated it, in just the manner in which it came, much more than I did.

"The land won't wait," he boomed, rolling back in his chair and squinting at me out of slightly puzzled, good-natured eyes. "If the crops aren't good, Russia suffers. And the army suffers. We must go home soon."

I must, he said, see the steppe country—"not *steps!*" he chuckled—and the Volga and Moscow and Kiev. He spoke of the Zemstvo Union and was evidently anxious that I, as a stranger, should not get the notion that they had any political aims. They helped the army and were a great education for the people, he said, but they were not playing politics. He called the vice-president to join him in the amusing business of having their pictures taken—the sort of man one would like to visit in the country: more fun there than in the chilly formality of Petrograd.

The lobby of the Duma chamber, the Catherine Hall, used to be the palace ballroom. It is a huge and handsome hall of columns, and with this and the park and tea-rooms, the deputies were comfortable enough, however politically circumscribed.

It was interesting to the foreigner to see the priests in their long blue cassocks strolling about with the other politicians—big, handsome, good-natured men with cavernous voices, and hair and beards like prophets. Some were sleek, and comparatively urban, one or two, with their eyes of zealots and hair bleached by sun and rain, might have just come in from a desert pilgrimage. All sat on the conservative Right.

Another decorative figure was a Cossack deputy, Mr. Karaoolov, an original gentleman who insisted on wearing a fancy blue bell-skirted costume, such as his ancestors may have worn a century or two ago. Somewhat diffidently I asked Mr. Karaoolov if one might take his photograph. He answered in French that one could, and led the way to the garden where he stood still and also walked toward me, swinging his stick, all with great gravity and good humor.

Two of the deputies of the Right, Mr. Purishkevitch and Mr. Markov, were generally pointed out to strangers. They are intransigent reactionaries and have a wide notoriety for their violent sentiments and language. Mr. Purishkevitch, for instance, is said once to have interrupted Mr. Miliukov while the latter was speaking, with the comment that if he did not spit in his face it was only that he could not spit far enough. Observations scarcely

less picturesque are attributed to Mr. Markov. In private life the latter is a landowner from the Kursk prairie country south of Moscow—a large, swarthy, saturnine man with a mop of long, stiff, curly hair, suggesting the old-fashioned Indian medicine-man. He contented himself with merely staring gloomily at even the most liberal speakers during my visits to the Duma, and I went to call on him one day, expecting, and perhaps rather wickedly hoping, that he would cut loose according to popular story. Possibly Mr. Markov himself suspected this, for he received us—an amiable interpreter and myself, for he preferred to speak Russian—with an air of caution, and answered each question without a smile and all the statesmanlike reserve of a candidate on the night before election.

I asked Mr. Markov if he thought the Duma should be done away with. With the prefatory remark that his party was united with all the others in pushing the war, he opined that the Duma need not be done away with, but that it should exist only as an advisory or critical body and not "get between the Tsar and his government." He did not believe in making the ministry responsible to the Duma, preferring, he added gravely, our American system, where ministers were chosen by and responsible to the President.

And how about the Union of Zemstvos? To the union itself he was opposed, he said. Too much politics. Too much talk and too little work. There were always plenty of people to give orders and too few to do actual practical work. In his "government," for instance, in Kursk, the Zemstvo was helping, and that was all right. So should all the Zemstvos help, but they should take their orders from the government. The necessary central power was already in the Ministry of War; there was no need of another government within the government.

Mr. Markov is a notorious Jew baiter, and when I asked him what was his plan for settling the Jewish question, his brow clouded. The Jewish question, he said, speaking slowly and with great dignity, had been a question since the time of the pyramids. The pyramids, or at any rate some of them, had crumbled, but the Jews were still with us. Apparently there was no solution. There was nothing, certainly, in the Palestine notion. They would never be a race of farmers, for they were money-lenders and exploiters—exploiters in a good sense, perhaps, but still they would live off other people. An economic boycott might help some—that might at least drive the Jews out of Russia and somewhere else: to South America or—and Mr. Markov smiled grimly—to the United States.

The deputy from Kursk was, of course, a famous wild man, yet a man of parts, nevertheless, and his grave assurance that the Duma oughtn't to "come between the Tsar and his government," is suggestive of traditions that it is well to keep in mind in measuring the tremendous task which faced any sudden attempts at popular government.

The bureaucracy is another fact which may readily be misunderstood. A bureaucracy is one sort of civil service, and the Russian bureaucracy, in which bureau-chiefs governed in the name of the Tsar but often, in practice, just about as they pleased, differed, roughly speaking, from the sort of civil service we should approve of, in not being subject to control by the people. There were all sorts of bureaucrats, good and bad, and imperfect as it was, it was, nevertheless, the machine with which a vast amount of necessary work was done. To uproot in a day this huge administrative network, down through the various grades, or *chins*, of which government descended from Petrograd out to the farthest Siberian village, and successfully to put something else in its place, would have been a miracle which such men as Prince Lvoff or Professor Miliukov would probably be the last to attempt.

Under the surface unity of imperial Russia were gaps and contrasts and hostilities as glaring almost

as those in Mexico. The people were not, in a national sense, politically experienced. There was no such public spirit or common information as there is in our newspaper-made civilization, where an idea launched to-day is known to every one to-morrow, whether it originated in Maine or California. People of superlative gifts and intelligence are found side by side with hordes who have no gifts or information at all. And aspiration and spiritual enthusiasm are constantly coupled with physical passiveness and indifference.

The Russian *moujik*, singing at his work, is nearer the truth than we, perhaps, scowling in our sky-scrapers. But that, unfortunately, is not the point. He must learn to sing in a world of machines, and this task, which the western world hasn't yet solved, he is suddenly asked to undertake without the western world's years of experiment. Nevertheless, the revolution is a fact, one of those tremendous facts which suddenly put an end to theorizing. The Russian people insisted on running their own war, the Duma refused to dissolve. And this will and initiative, expressed in the conduct of the war, must go on expressing itself, in at least somewhat the same strength, in the conduct of affairs in times of peace.

VI

RUSSIA'S WAR PRISONERS

It was at Kiev that I met that blue-gray tide of captives which had been flowing eastward across Russia ever since Brusiloff's offensive got well under way in June. The ancient city on the Dnieper had long been close to the fighting. One could still see the emergency bridge which, in the panicky weeks of 1915 when the enemy were driving east from Lemberg, had been flung across the river. Now that victory was swinging the other way, it was a natural concentration point for prisoners, and it was here, in a big fenced camp in the woods not far from the city, that most of those swept up in the Bukowina fighting were herded, sorted out, and reshipped to prison camps farther east.

Day after day, through the short, hot Russian summer, the long trains of cattle-cars dumped their fresh thousands into the big camp in the dusty pines. The Austro-Hungarian Slavs were separated, generally. Kiev was full of these paroled prisoners, still in their faded Austrian uniforms, sleepily driving transport wagons or working on the streets. There was little fear that they would try to escape

back to their own country, merely to be sent to the front again. The German-Austrians, Hungarians, and Germans were sent farther east—toward Kazan, down the lower Volga, and to Siberia.

Kiev was the first real stopping-place for most of them, and they still carried some of the air of the battle-field. The lightly wounded still wore their rough field dressings; many had scarcely got over the surprise of capture. Team spirit still held them. They were still soldiers, fighting men, part of an army. And here the last of these props fell away. They were no longer part of a great, onrushing organization, no longer soldiers. There was no more vengeance nor hope of victory. They suddenly became nothing; a body to cover, a stomach to feed; stranded human cattle, facing, each for himself, the vastness and mystery of Russia—cold, distance, a hundred inherited dreads. An Englishman or German captured on the Somme might have a comfortable or uncomfortable time, but at any rate he never left the cosey distances of western Europe. There were records to go to, easy communication by way of Switzerland; it was only a matter of a few weeks before his family knew at least where he was and where letters and packages might reach him.

The prisoner in Russia faced quite another prospect. It was not a country, it was a continent he

disappeared in. By the time his telegram or post-card with the news of his capture got back to his home-town, he might be a thousand or three thousand miles away from the place at which he mailed it. By the time his peasant parents had scraped a few dollars together and sent them to Siberia, he might be down in Turkestan or working on a railroad up above the arctic circle.

A package travels all the way from Hungary up through Sweden and Finland down into southern Russia for a prisoner who left three weeks before. The package is heaped with others like it, or sent on to another camp—by that time the man has gone somewhere else. In the banks are piles of telegrams two feet high—money-orders for prisoners whose whereabouts nobody knows. Post-cards from hundreds of far-off Austrian and German villages, helpless, half-hopeless little messengers sent out into the Russian unknown, pile up in neutral consulates—relief workers go round with great packs of them, hoping some day to deliver one.

DEAREST SON: *It is sixteen months since we heard from you. . . .*

. . . It is eighteen months since we had news from you, and at last we have your address from the Red Cross. . . .

DEAREST CHILD: *Your card has come to-day, and we are very sad to learn that you are so ill. God grant that you need not die in that strange land. We pray for you and trust in the dear God. You were always our good son. . . .*

. . . Your postal of December 12 *arrived April* 4, *and was the first word we have received. Our joy was indescribable. Haven't you got anything from us—this is the fifth letter I have sent? I wish there were something I could send you, if you would only get it. For eight days now we have been celebrating the dear Easter; it is already the second which I must go through alone. . . .*

I had turned over scores of these lost post-cards a few days before, from mothers and wives, and innumerable little Mitzis and Gretls.

Your dear card received with great joy and thank you with all my heart. I cannot understand, Oscar dear, why you have heard so little from me. If I were only a little bird and had two little wings (wenn ich ein Vöglein wär und auch zwei Flüglein hätte) *I would fly to you, but as that can't be, as you know, Oscar dear, I can only stay here and trust always in God that we shall be together again.*—Elsa.

One more kiss and greeting from far away from thy—Elsa.

Answer soon, O mein Herz trägt schwere Schmerzen!
—Elsa.

Dear Good Son: *At last, after ten weeks, again a sign of life. God be praised, you are well, as you write. Is the bullet still in your shoulder and doesn't it bother you? I have already sent some money. It can only go by way of Sweden, but perhaps you will get it. It made* 10 *kroner* (16 *marks* 30 *pfennigs in our money*), *and it must be changed again into rubles. Fritz writes he will soon come on leave. Last August on my birthday he was home for the first time, but not since then. Sophy will also come— Ach, could you only come too! The time must come, some time. You aren't quite so far away now at any rate. How did you manage to make the long journey, you who always find it so hard to travel. Did you meet, in Mos-*

cow or Orenburg, any comrades from Bunzlau, or Liegnitz? Lisel has surely sent you a photograph of herself and the little fellow. You can see what a sturdy youngster he is. Lisel has grown a little thinner in the face, which with the constant worry is no wonder. Doubtless it is the same with me, but now, that I have news from you, I live again. . . .

DEAR HUSBAND: *Again a Sunday and so alone—may my patience not leave me! During the last week I have helped every evening at the Schreiers'. Now it is already May and still our common wish is unfulfilled. When shall we ever see each other again? I cannot even think about it—it goes so slowly. . . .*

Some were blunt records of peasant lives. This from a village in lower Austria:

At last I have received cards from you. Lunzer Josef, Josef Wangner, Friedrich Haller, and my brother Johann are dead. Your brother Josef is at the front. Karl is at home, the others in garrison. We are all well. Your faithful wife, children, and Hansi (extra). . . .

Men for whom messages like these would presently be searching—peasants, professors, every sort of central European—came pouring off those trains: all reduced to almost common anonymity now, with nothing but the uniforms they stood in and a few Austrian kroners, perhaps, stored away in packets hung round their necks. They did not know what was expected of them; what they had to expect. They might be here days or only minutes. Meanwhile, two things must be done—they

must get word to their families and get a little Russian money. And this was not so simple as one might think.

Each telegram had to be read and stamped by the military censor, paid for, and taken into Kiev before it even started on its uncertain journey through the tangles of Russian and German censorships. It took time to learn that telegrams could be sent, that the censor must stamp them, time to find him and get the thing done, then they had to be paid for in rubles and kopecks by men who had only Austrian money, if any, and there was nobody whose business it was to change it. There was no one whose business it was to take telegrams. And all this time the trains were switching, and a man might at any moment get his orders to go.

Such things seem trivial enough as you read about them with food, clothes, and freedom to move about a matter of course. But to prisoners, animals in a herd, dependent even for a drink of water on their drover's will—they become tremendous. They may never see their families again—to go away without a ruble or two seems like jumping off a sinking ship without a life-preserver.

It is in such situations that neutral outsiders can make themselves useful, that one can be thankful there are neutral outsiders. If any one doubts

the service which neutrals can perform in a world-wide calamity like this, he might begin his education by spending a few days with a nurse or delegate giving "material relief." Nobody bothers much about these herds of prisoners—at least until they are shut up in permanent camps. They are nuisances at best—so many more mouths to feed. In the end and aggregate they may be well cared for, but hunger, thirst, and cold are matters of hours and minutes.

Droves of men come in with nothing at all but the uniforms they stand in—overcoats and blankets gone, even watches and finger-rings, sometimes. A neutral relief worker can bridge over some of the gaps, do a few of the things that nobody else will do. It is also his job, when prisoners are finally disposed of, to look after some of the more immaterial things that nobody bothers about—books, amusements, letters and packages from home—the things with or without which prison life becomes a tolerable penance or a sort of inferno.

There is need of such work in all countries, but particularly so, perhaps, in Russia, where communication is difficult and the individual was more than usually unable to make head against material circumstances, against that vague power above, which had had generations of experience in devising means to keep people from getting what they want

—that vast, cold negation stretching across a continent.

Swedes, Danes, and Americans were all helping with prisoners in Russia. There were American Red Cross doctors and nurses, later, all withdrawn, unfortunately; there were delegates from the Embassy and the Y. M. C. A. The latter had been particularly useful, partly because the Y. M. C. A. delegates were doing the same kind of work for Russian prisoners in Germany. One of these delegates, Mr. George M. Day, a man fitted for his task by temperament, knowledge of languages, and understanding and liking for the Russian people, was working at Kiev during Brusiloff's offensive. It was on some of those summer days when herds of prisoners were quite overwhelming him that, through the courtesy of the prison commandant, I was permitted to lend a hand. Every day at noon he went out to the prison camp, loaded down with underclothing, socks, towels, and handkerchiefs, and a great roll of rubles which disappeared like a snowball on a hot stove. Three or four men with telegraph blanks and an unlimited supply of money, clothing, Russian grammars, and other things prisoners want, could have kept busy in those crowded days. But there was no such help available and, even had there been, no permission to use it. Outsiders are, at best, under such circum-

stances, on thin ice. They are dealing with the enemy, and face two dilemmas—the impossible amount to be done, and the danger of overworking their welcome and being cut off altogether. Day did what he could, with tact, patience, and understanding. The instant "Herr Konsul," as most of the prisoners addressed him, hove in sight, staggering under his bundles of clothes, the men flocked around like chickens around the farmer's wife. Running along beside him, getting in front, clicking their heels and snapping their hands to their caps, they pursued him until he left at sundown with the work only half done.

Dozens had their censored telegrams ready and waiting, only two words, generally, and the address: "*Gesund—gefangen*" ("prisoner—all right"). Under a tree, or at one of the long, outdoor tables, with the men crowding round, he counted the words and told how much the message cost. Few had Russian money or had the right change. The telegrams took an endless amount of small change. They pooled their telegrams, and a man who had money paid for three or four of his friends', or—send them, they would say, never mind the change.

Everybody wanted money. There were hundreds, sometimes thousands, of Austrian kronen to be changed into rubles, and in every sort of odd amount. The comparatively personal and casual

nature of the relief work necessarily made the available capital small, and, even as it was, Day spent most of the morning at the banks trying to change the big pack of kronen notes he had collected the afternoon before into rubles again. Rarely was there enough to go round; sometimes not half enough.

With their bewildered "*bittes,*" they pushed up in droves. "*Bitte,* Herr Konsul . . . only three kronen. . . . But they couldn't wait till to-morrow . . . they were already ordered on the train —*schon einwagoniert!* . . ."

The clever ones, understanding how hard it was to make change, put their money together, trusting to divide their rubles later on. Others, big, dazed peasant soldiers, with thick fingers, shuffled up hanging on to all they had—some ragged little two-kronen note—about forty cents. For these small bills the Kiev banks paid only thirty kopecks to the crown, about half of their worth at home. And three twenty-kopeck stamps for a two-crown note (paper stamps have been used in Russia for kopecks since the war) seemed nothing at all. For bills of ten crowns or over the banks paid thirty-seven kopecks to the crown, and for gold, forty-five kopecks.

These odd fractional amounts called for an endless supply of small money, and two or three men

were always waiting, until, by some hocus-pocus, we were able to make change. There was one particularly patient old German, a man of forty-five or fifty, who came back again and again one afternoon, each time to ask in the politest way if we couldn't change a few marks, and finally came too late, just after the last of the Russian money was gone. To-morrow, I told him, but the next day he was gone—off to the East somewhere, goodness knows where. And things like this were always happening. Clumping back to Kiev through the dusty twilight, in the crowded little dummy-engine tram, we would recall such cases. To-morrow, first thing, we must hunt up *that* man, but next day he would be gone.

Once, in the line, came a peasant boy asking what was given for ten kronen in gold. Four rubles fifty. He stood for a long time thinking. Others pushed by him and changed their bills, and at last he reached down in his pocket and pulled out a wad of paper, many times folded. In this was a gold piece—one could imagine that his mother had given it to him when he went away to war, and told him to keep it for some such time as this—until the very last. Very slowly he pushed it out, together with fifty kopecks borrowed from a comrade to make the change, took the five-ruble bit of Russian paper, turned it over and over, folded it care-

fully, and pushed it down into his pocket, looking as if he had lost his last friend.

The Austrian soldiers' caps were stuck full of pins from their various campaigns. There was "*Balkan Armée,*" "*Izonzo Armée,*" "*Gott Schütze Tirol*" (God protect the Tyrol), and so on. And there was a curious irony in these labels—these little symbols for which bands had played and great guns roared, and for which, like marionettes, they had been ready to march, shoot, charge, suffer, and die.

One afternoon there was nearly the whole of a division staff—slim, courtly gentlemen with the amiable, slightly playful Austrian air. I had lunched at staff headquarters with men just like them on the Bug and Zlota-Lipa, the year before. There were several young counts, graceful, rather languid youths, more at home in drawing-rooms, one would say, than in trenches. They poked over the queer-looking shirts and underwear for which Day had contracted with a couple of enterprising young Kiev Jews, and counted out their money with a whimsical air of tourists buying curiosities. One heard English English, and Viennese German, and now and then a plaintive Hungarian phrase that brought back Budapest and the Danube and gypsy orchestras playing in the cafés along the river.

Caught up with them somehow—for it was

rumored that the Russians were not taking many German prisoners—was a bronzed, hawk-eyed lion of a man, a middle-aged Landsturm man, with a deep voice, a Munich German. His battalion had been on the French front, had been rushed over to support the Austrians, and had been with them only two days. They scarcely knew where they were, went into action as soon as they were detrained, threw back three Russian attacks, and then, first thing they knew, were taken in the rear and there were Russians all around them. Eight hundred out of a thousand were lost, he said, "all men over forty—some of them had sixteen children at home. . . ."

Every now and then among the Austro-Hungarians a Jew bobbed up—there was one clever, pushing sort of fellow. He argued about the low exchange we gave him, wanted to know how he, just out of hospital, and on a diet, was going to get along on prison food. As for being Austrian, he had lived for eighteen years in Luxemburg, where he was a linen merchant and looked on himself as an internationalist. "It's a pity about France, but as a democrat how can I hope that these people will win—what sort of civilization do they bring?"

As soon as telegrams were counted and money changed, and "Herr Konsul" started across the prison-yard, men with every conceivable request

and appeal tried to get a word with him. They would pop out from behind trees or with backs indifferently turned until he was free, whirl around, whack their heels, and fling out their story.

One man showed a telegram, months old, tattered from being folded and refolded. It was from his wife and said that money had been sent to his camp in Turkestan. He had been shifted while it was on the way—couldn't something be done about it? Of course nothing could be done about it—or probably nothing. It might take weeks of red-tape unwinding to get an answer from the other camp, and in the meanwhile he would have been shifted somewhere else. Nevertheless, Day took it up as he took up innumerable such things, jotted the facts down in his note-book, and started an inquiry going.

An officer—as a rule, the German officers looked after their men more carefully than the Austrians—came up with a queer, dazed old fellow who had been wounded and made prisoner early in 1914, and been shifted back and forth across Russia ever since, and begged us to do something for the *armer Kerl.* A shower of shrapnel had brought him down during the first Russian advance: he was blind in one eye, one leg was no use, there was a piece out of his side, but he had contrived to pull through. He had been sent to Siberia, back here, and had

been in the camp for weeks now, apparently forgotten. Did he have a wife, friends? Yes, he had a wife, at any rate he had one in 1914. Obediently he wrote a telegram to an address which he seemed almost to have forgotten, asking his wife to send him fifteen rubles. It was on the Bug he was wounded, he said, and kept repeating that, as if it somehow explained everything.

One of the barracks—they were built half below ground, like greenhouses, with sleeping shelves along each side and a double-deck row in the centre—was full of civilians. These were men swept up in villages and farmhouses between the lines—people who had tried to stick it out even when the fighting rolled over them. They were suspected, generally, of some sort of spying. Without even a ragged uniform to give them standing in this world of soldiers, they combined the weakness and wretchedness of civilians and criminals, and were the sorriest of all the prisoners.

One, a cadaverous-looking fellow, who might have been a village schoolmaster, belonged in some unpronounceable place in the Bukowina. But it was not himself he pleaded for—it was his brother. They were going to hang the brother. He was in prison back there, in that outlandish, far-off village, and unless we could do something they certainly—and he drew his finger with a queer sort

of cluck across his own scrawny neck. And his brother was absolutely innocent—"*ganz unschuldig!*" There were witnesses to prove that he was in his house all the time.

His voice rose almost to a shriek as we started away, for a lot of use civilian outsiders would be in a military business like this. He kept repeating his story as if we hadn't heard it. Among all these men, each with his own problem and tragedy, that was *his*, the one important thing, to which everybody must listen. Very likely they *would* hang his brother: all sorts of things happen, and happen very quickly in war-time—he might be hanged already—and there was nothing one could do but shake one's head and say it was too bad and go off, leaving him babbling his *ganz unschuldig—ganz unschuldig*—and drawing his finger across his neck.

A group of Hungarian officers, dark-eyed fellows, with quick movements and soft and ingratiating voices, saluted us at the gate. They had received no money for four days. What, please, Mr. Consul, were *they* to do? Officers were supposed to be paid a ruble and a half a day, out of which they took care of themselves. When this was held up they had nothing and were worse off, sometimes, than common soldiers. We went to the office to find out the trouble. It seemed that the bookkeeper was away. But they would get their pay soon—*sichas*

(at once); *zavtra* (to-morrow)—as they say in Russia, just as they say *mañana* in Mexico or Spain.

In such cases and where men were going away without money, the Y. M. C. A. man used his judgment and gave outright, either from his own funds or from those sent to be thus administered by the Austrian and German Governments. For the record's sake each signed a sort of I O U, though it was doubtful if such notes would ever be collected. There were, in any case, none of those misgivings which often cloud and complicate ordinary city charity. There was nothing to investigate. No fault of theirs had brought them here—what had these men done that they should be going away to face tuberculosis or typhus in some overcrowded camp or die of pneumonia and exposure in some winter railroad-gang? The telegrams and clothes and money were services as concrete and trifling as pulling out of the water a man who can't swim.

There was a constant demand for books, especially Russian-German grammars and dictionaries. Day cleaned out the Kiev book-shops of dictionaries; got all they would send him from Moscow and Petrograd. Hundreds wanted dictionaries who couldn't get them. And this sort of service, it seemed, not only relieved discomfort but helped make the world go round. These men were going to learn the language of their enemies, to talk with

them, read their literature, perhaps, know their good sides as well as that more or less insane perversion of their worst qualities which is used to drive civilized peoples into battle.

There was something fascinating in the idea—all Siberia a sort of university, as indeed it is, and as are all prison-camps. Peasants are learning to read and write, learning carpentry, weaving, box-making, gardening, all sorts of things that will be useful when they return home; educated men acquiring languages, and points of view they would never otherwise have bothered with.

Echoes, quaint and otherwise, of this unexpected sort of schooling come pouring in to the relief workers from farthest Siberia:

My books are very imperfect, and I would read a reading which is full of the lively language. I beg you are so kind and stand by me whith advice. I would, after the war all the expenses which it should, all the troubles and things pay whith pleasure. At home I are rich but there I am a outlawed powerless prisoner. . . .

I beg your pardon but when you do know how heavy is the life for a young man, which must sit in his room nearly sixteen months without habit work (I am an engineer for machine) you will me understand. . . .

At home I am secretary of the Bohemian Athletic Football Association and have always interesting myself for the American and English sportsmans which stand on the top by all nations. Where I could maintain a book for Olympic plays at Stockholm? . . .

Stranded doctors and professors wrote for scientific and medical books—"Repetitorium der Physiologie (Du Bois-Reymond)," "Innere Krankheiten (Malkmus)," and so on. To one such was addressed another of those lost letters, a letter from Vienna, enclosing a woman's photograph:

Ernstl is well and seems very precocious for his age. He wants to know everything, especially all medical things. Franzl is very strong and always happy, and the hot stove in his picture book will he by no means touch. While Hilda always asks the little girl in the picture book to stop crying and tells her everything is already all right—es ist schon gut—*God protect you. . . .*

A German captain writing to his "Frau Professor" in Königsberg asked that money be sent through the American Consul, Vladivostok, also Pushkin and Gogol in Russian, and "my glasses, No. 11–12, for short-sightedness, with a stout case." One of the prisoners in the camp at Kiev was a young Leipzig University professor who hoped we might get him an "Iphigenia" in Greek, to chew on in his exile. There were men of every class, as there must be in universal-service armies.

The village adjoining the prison-camp was one of those collections of summer cottages, or *dachas*, common in the neighborhood of Russian cities. It was not exactly like anything outside of Russia —big, loose, and comfortable, haphazard, and in-

teresting. You would scarcely know there was a village, so thick were the trees. The streets were immensely wide, and so were the sidewalks or rather the dirt paths, and grass and weeds grew on them and in the road. Houses seemed to be set every which way, and mixed up with flowers, vegetable-gardens, beehives, into a sort of domestic crazy-quilt. People strolled about and now and then one caught sight of a veranda with table set and samovar steaming cheerfully. You would meet a couple of young girls in bright, peasant costumes, or boys in belted Russian blouses, or some pretty matron, an officer's wife, with one of those fringed white shawls splashed with red and green flowers and leaves, flung across one shoulder and round the hips.

We dropped in for tea with a lady whose husband was an engineer and had had something to do with laying out the prison-camp. Their own tea was over; nothing, however, would do but we must wait till she made some more. In a moment the samovar was steaming again. There was cold chicken, cucumbers fresh from the garden, a great chunk of what looked like wild honey, cherry tarts, and a big, brown jar of milk. Russians do not tremble at mixing milk and cucumbers. Her children always did, our hostess said, and, of course, cucumbers and sour cream is a common Russian dish.

She was a dark, lithe, vivacious woman, and rattled away in Russian and French, begging us to take more of everything. It was a pity, she said, that women did not have more to do with the government in Russia, for the Russian women had more sense of order and organization than had the men.

Two dachshunds pattered about the porch, and I ventured some vapid jest about their German ancestry and asked if she was not afraid they were spies.

She responded quite seriously: "No, I am not afraid. We are not much interested in politics. This war is all a great blunder. I do not hate nor fear these men, who are men like our own, and I keep thinking that over there in Germany are women just like ourselves who are worrying about them."

And this belief she showed in practical form every day. Her pleasant veranda was a sort of open house for the officer prisoners permitted to walk about the village, and two languid young Austrian counts who asked me when peace was coming and how they could ever possibly endure Russia for a year, and showed generally altogether too little appreciation of their good fortune, were lounging on the porch when we arrived. A doctor prisoner who helped in the prison hospital was taking his evening constitutional in the village street,

an Austrian painter in civilian clothes was dashing about—he had many commissions for portraits—as if he owned the place, and some of the soldier prisoners were walking with the Russian peasant girls.

Anything more free and easy than that village you could scarce imagine, and it was thoroughly characteristic of Russia that the winter before the barracks had not been finished in time; a transport of prisoners came in from the front in the evening, the men dropped down, worn out, on the ground, with only their overcoats to cover them, and in the morning four were frozen to death.

So things happen in Russia—to prisoners and to their own people—not because any one wills it nor because they are cruel, but because of indifference to material things, because "of our fatal tendency to delays, to take measures in time." Habits cannot be made over in a day merely because there are hundreds of thousands of war prisoners to take care of. They do as they are used to do—what is customary among a people, only a small minority of whom have our ideas of sanitation, fresh air, and cleanliness, whose organization is so incomplete that bread will be scarce in Moscow, as it was now and then, although one of the things Russia is fighting for is an open port on the south from which to export her wheat.

Sanitary conditions in some prison-camps have been bad, prisoners have died from exposure while working on the railroad to the White Sea. On the other hand, one found conditions like those in this pleasant village, and I have seen photographs taken by Y. M. C. A. workers in some of the Siberian camps where husky Germans and Austrians were playing tennis, and standing on each other's shoulders in athletic pyramids, apparently in the pink of condition.

In one camp, the prisoners, as they often do, had organized a band. There are accomplished artists of all sorts in these cross-sections of civilized Europe—it is only luck that Fritz Kreisler, instead of returning to give concerts in this country, after his four weeks in the trenches, wasn't captured and buried in one of these Siberian camps. It was a great thing for the players, for the other prisoners, and even for the authorities themselves, for it made men forget conditions about which they might otherwise have complained. The amount of all-round good such an orchestra can do in a prison-camp can scarcely be exaggerated.

All went swimmingly until suddenly came one of those mysterious orders, one of those little shivers of distrust and reaction which periodically sweep across the Russian official mind. The concerts were forbidden, the band broken up, not allowed

to practise. Why? Because it was a bad thing for the morale of the Russian soldiers at the front if they got the idea that prisoners were better off than they were!

This sort of stupidity must be expected now and then, as the inevitable reaction of a certain type of militaristic or bureaucratic mind. Inevitable, too, where the habit of distrusting popular initiative is ingrained, was the more or less constant suspicion, on the part of the authorities, of even the most unselfish efforts to help. There is no need of accenting these things. They and their results are a side of Russian life which has always been exploited in the west. A more sensible attitude is that taken by one of the neutral relief workers, who said, in a report I happened to read, that he had almost invariably found people ready to co-operate with him both in Russia and in Germany, and that it had proved much more useful to call attention to the good things in each place, rather than to add to the existing supply of hatred by attempting to exploit cruelties or mistakes. You could get much more out of one side by telling them how good they were or how well their own men were treated by the other people, than by starting in by asserting that they must reform.

So far as Russian officials were concerned this attitude was particularly sensible and true. "Scratch a

Russian and you find a Tartar," and many outsiders appeared so fascinated by this somewhat threadbare observation that they started in scratching at once. The officials were used to it, promptly drew in their heads like turtles, and there was no doing anything with them. They could not be driven, but they would do a great deal for people they liked. One generalization outsiders might well have kept in mind, both in passing judgment and in attempting to improve conditions—nothing was being done to prisoners of war to which Russians had not long been accustomed in handling similar masses of their own people.

VII

A RUSSIAN COTTON KING

THE American cotton king of whom we read now and then in the papers is generally a speculator, with a down-town office like any other broker, and his visible kingdom consists of a roll-top desk, a stenographer, and a spool of ticker tape. There are cotton kings in Russia, too, but they are quite different. They are mill owners, and little kings, in fact, and rule in paternal fashion, not only over their business, but over the lives of the thousands who work for them.

The Russian, or, at any rate, the particular manufacturer I have in mind, does not lock his office door at night and roll off in his limousine to another world. He puts his mill away off in the country somewhere, builds up a community around it, and lives there with his work-people very much as a man lives on a big plantation. He provides houses for them, schools, and hospitals; he sees them into the world and out of it, and looks after nearly every detail of their lives, from their religion to their amusements, on the way. Modern machinery and

feudalism—or, at least, some of its surviving habits—meet, in short, in such a mill, and the owner's country house, although it was built only yesterday and looks exactly like the country home of any American millionaire, is really, in its relation to his retainers, an old-fashioned baronial castle.

There are several of these big cotton-mill communities in Russia. Mr. Alexander Konovaloff, Minister of Transportation in the new government, is the third generation of a family of cotton weavers. His mills are on the Volga, near Yaroslav. There are a number of cotton-mills near Moscow, which is one of the manufacturing centres of Russia, and several belong to various branches of the Morosoff family. The mills which I visited were those near the village of Bogorodsk, about an hour and a half out of Moscow on the Nizhni Novgorod road.

It was in New York that I happened to meet one of the brothers who, with their father, conduct these Bogorodsk mills. He was not grinding an unlighted cigar between his teeth—the indispensable mark, as the American stage-manager teaches us, of the captain of industry—nor did he talk in telegraphic sentences, and there was nothing to indicate that this unassuming gentleman was accustomed, back in Russia, to having twelve thousand people take off their hats to him. Quite mildly,

indeed, in a hullabaloo of clacking typewriters, he stopped me as I was leaving another man's office, wrote a line on his card, and hoped that if ever I got to Moscow I'd give it to his cousin there.

This cousin I found several months later in a big, quiet office in the merchant quarter of Moscow, a very busy but amiable young man, trying to attend to his cotton business and at the same time take care of all the committees, conferences, and so on, into which any such man of affairs is likely to be drawn in war-time—especially, perhaps, in Moscow, where people belong and have roots, and everybody, so to speak, knows everybody else.

He found time, however, to telephone out to Bogorodsk, and next day two boys, one the son of the Morosoff I had seen in New York, came in to escort me to the mill. Both were still in school, they spoke French and a little English, and the younger wore the blouse and military belt and cap of the Russian schoolboy. He carried a tennis-racket, and wanted to know right away if I played and whether American football was more like Association or Rugby. They took me to the station in the cousin's automobile, got a ticket for me and tea, pointed out the *dachas*, or summer cottages, on the way to Bogorodsk, the Austrian prisoners working along the road, the new cable-line that was to bring electric power to the mills—in short, were

The owner's house—only a stone's throw from the mill.

A family group at the foot of the garden behind the house.

just like any well-mannered, wide-awake, hospitable preparatory-school boys at home.

For an hour and a half we rode away from the surroundings in which one generally finds mills in America, alighted at a village with wide, unpaved streets, and houses made of planed logs, and drove three or four versts farther. Here, by a little river, on ground formerly covered by pine-woods, were mills, cottages, dormitories, school, hospital, theatre, park—a little city, in fact.

The brother received me, and in businesslike fashion said that, as I had but two days and there was much to see, we had best set out at once. He showed me a map of the works, and then took me to a little old-fashioned room, in a low, old-fashioned part of the factory, to meet his father.

The elder Morosoff spoke some English, but held more firmly to the habits of an earlier generation than his sons. He wore his Russian boots outside his trousers, a long coat and longish hair; he went to bed at nine every night and got up at five for a bath in the river. He never spent a night away from the mills, and, though he occasionally could be lured to Moscow, he always came back to his own bed in the country. Like most of the Morosoffs, he was an "Old Believer"—a sect which has endured persecution and stubbornly held itself apart from the main body of the Russian church for dif-

ferences—whether the priest shall bless with two fingers or three, for instance—which seem comparatively unimportant to outsiders—in short, just such a canny, hard-headed old gentleman as a playwright of the Manchester school would create to represent the older generation in a long line of mill owners. Between him and the young gentleman who had come out with me there were much the same differences that one so often sees in our own country between pioneers and their grandchildren.

We walked out past a long line of women and children waiting with baskets outside the company's store, just as people waited then in Petrograd for sugar. They were not compelled to buy here, Mr. Morosoff said, but the company had laid in big supplies, still kept to peace prices, and they could do better here than in the village. Then we entered a cottage-office, where, round a horseshoe-shaped table, sat a sort of council of village elders. These wise men were all employees, some had worked up from the bottom, each represented some department of the factory, and it was their duty to pass on the various applications for work, change of quarters, and so on.

When an employee wanted anything—a house of his own, for instance—he filled out a long paper form which was passed in to this council, and they

decided what the company could do for him. They were going over these applications, discussing, stamping, and signing them as we looked in. This council, Mr. Morosoff said, was the backbone of the community's government. But, in addition, the father and son had certain hours when any workman might personally consult them.

The wise men rose and bowed gravely as we looked in, and then, after we had glanced at several hospital buildings, including a lying-in hospital, we went through some of the workmen's barracks. Not all the twelve thousand work-people lived in these. A few came every day from the village. Heads of departments had their own houses, on company property, resembling the usual comfortable commuter's house in a New York suburb, and the more skilful or dependable workmen also lived in separate cottages which the company had helped them acquire.

The dormitories were big barracks of three or four stories, with iron stairways, stone floors, and apartments of from one to three rooms, opening off a corridor which ran the length of the building. Most of these apartments were occupied by families, each of which had a little shed in the yard and also space in a loft for its big wooden chest and other heavy things. Cooking and washing were done in common rooms, and in the kitchen were a dozen

or so of the flues with which the charcoal fire is started in the samovar.

We looked into a number of these miniature homes. There was always a bed piled with an incredible number of pillows—for the Russian peasant prefers, for some reason, to sleep half sitting up—and generally a baby's cradle hanging on a cord like a bird-cage. The rooms were light, clean according to the somewhat easy-going Russian standards; there were flowers in most of the windows, and they compared favorably, at least, with the city tenements used by the same class of workers at home.

These people had, however, this advantage—they were in the country already, and two minutes' walk from their somewhat stuffy apartments took them to the middle of a pine forest. We took a turn through these woods, tunnelled with dark, restful *allées*. A few mothers and children were walking there then, and on Sundays, one fancied, it must have been full. I asked what the people did to amuse themselves away off here in the country.

There was a theatre, Mr. Morosoff said, where they had movie pictures and occasionally a company down from Moscow—for this latter, a nominal admission fee was charged—there were the river and woods, and then they had an amusement park of their own. We walked down to it

through the pines—a football-field, bicycle-track, outdoor movie theatre, bath-house, dancing and refreshment pavilion, and so on. Most of the younger men had gone off to fight, so that things were quieter here on holidays now than usual, but even in peace times, Mr. Morosoff said, it was rather slow work getting the people interested in games. As a matter of fact, the Russians have comparatively little "sporting" spirit, in the American or English sense of the word. They are intensely fond of the country, of singing, dancing, drinking, and just loafing about in the sun, but athletics for their own sake, or the kind of concentrated effort required for any sort of fast, competitive game, seems rather foreign to their temperament.

Everywhere we went, and later in the mills, gatemen and workmen generally took off their hats and bowed in the grave fashion with which the Russian peasant is accustomed to salute his social superiors. Some of the older men bowed with a regular old *boyar* gesture, but there was neither servility on one side nor stony aloofness on the other. The salutes were made with much gravity and dignity, the proprietor always lifting his own hat in reply, and one felt again that essentially simple and friendly relationship so often seen between different classes in Russia.

It was dark, and the mills were all ablaze as we entered and began to follow up the complicated and fascinating process of cotton weaving from the first shaking up of the rough bales from Egypt, America, and Turkestan—ablaze with lights and with magic: the magic which fascinates almost any unthinking inhabitant of this twentieth century when he sees machinery making things whose existence, ready-made, he has always taken for granted.

It seemed that almost as many things are made out of cotton as of coal-tar. White cloth and prints are only the beginning. There was khaki and canvas for tents, fine shirtings and crêpe de chine, thick drab blankets for the army, corduroys and luxurious-looking red and blue velvet. It ought not to surprise one, perhaps, that merely by clipping the upper layer of thread in an ordinary piece of cotton cloth, you can turn it into soft, luminous velvet, but it surprised me, nevertheless.

The cloth was stretched like a drumhead upon a frame across the room, a barefooted peasant woman inserted a needle-like knife-blade under the thread, and so went trotting across the room, ripping as she went. Then she put the needle in again and trotted back. She walked about twenty kilometres a day, the superintendent said. It seemed slow and laborious, but the women looked

well and contented, and their work was certainly peaceful enough after the nerve-racking clatter of the spinning and weaving rooms. The corduroys were made by machinery.

Most of the machines—and this represents another liability for the Russian manufacturer—came from England. Some were French, some German, and some made in Russia, but I did not happen to see any from America. This, in addition to the care they have to take of their employees, is another reason why twice as much initial capital is needed to start such a business in Russia as in England.

In the velvet department we ran across an Englishman, a Lancashire man; and the manager of the mills, or at least of the spinning section, a pleasant-mannered Russian, also spoke English and had spent some time in England. He joined us for dinner, and, as we walked over toward the house, asked about labor unions and other things in America. The position of negroes seemed to interest him particularly. "Are they Christians?" he asked.

From the endless clatter and dusty air of the mills we stepped out into the cool dark, walked a couple of hundred yards, turned into a gateway where a *dvornik* gravely saluted, and were, all at once, in another world. A curved driveway led

through shrubs and flower-beds to a long, low, half-timbered country house which might have been lifted over from Long Island or Westchester. A big St. Bernard came galloping and barking out to meet us. The door was opened by a trim maid in black and white, and we stood in a wainscoted hall with the glimpses of rugs and paintings, the same air of ease and ordered comfort that one expects in such a country house at home.

A jolly little brother of the boys who had come down with me on the train soon appeared—he also spoke French, and wore now a belted Russian blouse and, when he went outdoors, one of those long, gray military overcoats in which the tiniest of Russian schoolboys look like field-marshals. Then there was a still littler sister with tremendously bright, slightly upslanting eyes, and another older sister with blond braids wound tightly round her head and the shy but distinguished air of a little princess. All of the young people bowed to the ikon in the corner and crossed themselves in the wide Russian fashion before they sat down to dinner, and as we rose from the table they turned gravely, bowed, and crossed themselves again before leaving the room.

The grandfather, who lived in another house, dropped in as we were finishing dinner to chat for a few moments before going to his Spartan slum-

Two of the dormitories used by workmen and their families.

View from the owner's house—one of the mills in the distance.

ber. We smoked and talked, went to another room presently, where a table was set with a steaming samovar, fruit and preserves and cake—for no Russian evening is complete without tea—and then at ten o'clock went to see the lights go out in the mills and the work-people come pouring into the street. Work began at four in the morning and stopped at ten at night, and the shifts were so arranged that each worked, on the average, a nine-hour day.

I pulled aside the portières next morning to find the windows opening on a view of lawn and river, which at home you would generally have to go hours away from factories to see, and it was characteristic that, beyond the woods across the river, projected the end of one of the weaving mills. All day we tramped up and down iron stairways, from the underground tunnels where the dusty air was pumped out and thrown away altogether, or washed with sprays and sent back again, up to the packing-rooms where girls were engaged in the comparatively elegant task of tying ribbons round packages of handkerchiefs or pasting labels on bolts of spotless white cloth. They were the mill's aristocracy and had time and the mood for smiles as we went through.

We saw machine-shops, where—another glimpse of the War Industrial Committee—they were mak-

ing shells for the army, and a particularly interesting school. There were rooms for kindergartens, clay modelling, and manual training, a well-equipped physics laboratory, and a large garden where each pupil had a bit of ground in which to raise vegetables.

In one room were a lot of big mounted prints, copies of more or less well-known paintings, illustrating different epochs of Russia's history. Russian artists have done a good deal of this kind of work, paintings which combine lively picturesqueness with accurate study of costumes and customs —what Frederic Remington did for our West. These prints were mounted on heavy pasteboard to stand rough handling. They covered the whole of Russian history through the various migrations and invasions and would have been interesting to anybody. Possibly we have such pictures in our own schools; at any rate, they were characteristic of the tactful care with which throughout these employers seemed to be looking out for the interest of their employees.

The workman's side of life in such a community —they have had their strikes here—could scarcely be more than touched on in such a glimpse. What was most interesting to an American was the variety and solidity of such a life from the employer's point of view, as compared with that of most manufac-

turers at home, though I believe there is at least one somewhat similar cotton-milling community in New England. Here was not merely a money-making business, but a career in the fullest sense of the word, combining half a dozen different avocations with the main business of cotton-making, and not only linking a man with the outside world, but rooting him in his own soil as well. Sanitation, housing, schools, amusements—all the things that social workers experiment with in a more or less detached fashion—were part of this proprietor's daily work. He had his "souls," as they used to say in Russia, in the serf days—souls for whom he was as directly responsible to his own conscience as he was to his customers for his cotton.

VIII

DOWN THE VOLGA TO ASTRAKHAN

One of the best things about the Volga is that it takes you away from Petrograd—away, that is to say, from this chilly "window on Europe," and down into the real Russia, which sprawls on the plain looking toward Asia and the sun. The Volga flows down through the heart of Russia as the Mississippi flows through the heart of the United States. It starts in the north, not far from Petrograd, and twists southwestward through nine "governments," until, just across from Persia, it spreads through two hundred mouths, into the Caspian Sea. It is much the longest river in Europe, nearly as long as the Mississippi. On it and its branches most of Russian history is hung, and with the canal, which connects the upper waters with the Neva, and so with Petrograd and the Baltic, it cuts a flowing road clear across Russia from Asia to the west.

The distance is twenty-three hundred miles as the river runs, and all these miles are taking one away from the black coats and bureaucrats of the capital and into the country—down into the great

Russian plain, with its white birches and wheat-fields and gilt and sky-blue domes, like little up-turned beets; and down through the Russian people, fine folks and lousy peasants, Great Russians, Little Russians, Tatars, Kalmucks, Kirghiz, and the rest —"my strange, sweet, nasty, precious country," as one of Turgenev's characters said.

A good many Americans will remember the Volga boat-song which a Russian balalaika orchestra played here a few years ago—wide, slow-sweeping, minor chords, half dirge, half sailor's chantey, through whose rhythmic strumming one was supposed to see a shaggy gang—like the boatmen in Riepen's picture—come out of the distance, dragging their barge, pass by and disappear again in the endless stretches of the river.

The picture which this called up was true of the old-time Volga, when thousands of such *burlaki*, sodden, shaggy beasts of burden, like the human driftwood in Gorky's "Lower Depths," did the Volga hauling. There are still some of these boatmen, but the Volga of to-day, particularly that war-time summer river, was quite another matter. Except for the immense log rafts, drifting down from the northern forests to the treeless provinces of Saratov, Samara, and Astrakhan, most of the traffic was in oil-burning steamers or big steel lighters pushed by tugs. And the Volga was popular

and even rather fashionable. People use the river as they used to use the Mississippi in the good old steamboat days, and the flat-bottomed steamers are something like Mississippi River boats except that most of them are oil-burning with low stacks. And now that war had closed the way to the European resorts, these floating hotels, much more clean and comfortable than most hotels in Russia, went rolling down to Astrakhan and back, packed with holiday travellers, some going for the trip itself, and some to pick up trains farther south for country estates or the summer resorts of the Caucasus.

It was with such a trainload, chattering French, English, and their own language, carrying tennis-rackets, cameras, fishing-tackle, candy-boxes, and magazines—the Russian equivalent of the crowd at the Grand Central taking the Adirondack Express—that I left Petrograd one June afternoon for Rybinsk, on the upper Volga, a night's journey from the capital. In my compartment was a sharp-faced young Jewess, rather ill at ease, and across the way, and possibly one of the causes of her embarrassment, a tall, rather distinguished-looking gentleman, more English than Russian in appearance, and his pretty daughter.

Both had a rather uppish, "society" air, they talked French to each other, and the young lady, I was presently interested to discover, was reading,

in English, Henry James's "Washington Square." Through this we presently got into conversation and became forthwith travelling companions for the next fortnight. They were going down to Astrakhan and back as far as the Kama—one of the Volga's tributaries coming in from the Urals, and more than a thousand miles long itself—and then up the Kama and back: more than a month of river travelling.

They were Polish, it appeared next morning, when I asked if they always talked French instead of Russian. The father had a big property near Dvinsk, where there are many such Polish estates, and a house in Petrograd, but in peace times they spent most of their time in Paris. They spoke Russian, of course, and various other languages, but felt more at home in French. The daughter did not care much for people and preferred a novel to most of the river sights, but the tall father liked to talk. He was particularly interested that evening in the position of negroes in America—whether they voted or not, and if they didn't, how Americans fitted that in with their theories of democracy.

The young Jewess, who was the daughter of the fat lady with a lot of baggage in the next compartment, had disappeared when bedtime came, and her small brother had taken her place. The Pole asked if I objected to Jews—"because," he said,

raising his eyebrows and glancing with tremendous solemnity at the child in the corner, "you're going to have one over your head to-night!"

We slept comfortably enough, without having the berths made up or undressing, although regular Russians attach small importance to such matters, and when cars are crowded, particularly second-class carriages, men and women bunk quite comfortably in the same compartment, just as they come. It was just about coffee time when we shook ourselves out of our blankets at Rybinsk, where a small steamer was waiting which would connect with the big boat a day or two lower down.

Rybinsk is eight hundred years old, and its little church with gilded shrines and kneeling peasants looked almost as ancient—a bleak little town, like hundreds of others, with dirty streets full of peasants in sheepskin coats and wrinkled boots—a straggling line of booths or shops along the river-road, stocked with all sorts of odds and ends, and a pervading smell of dried fish.

The Pole amiably helped me with my ticket, for in such places nothing but Russian is spoken generally, and I dumped my luggage in a deck cabin, and, opening the door to go out, nearly bumped into a young man in uniform coming in, who clicked his spurred boots and saluted. The uniform was that of the Corps des Pages, a school for the sons

of generals and other distinguished persons in Petrograd, and the young man was going to the front as an officer in the autumn. He spoke French and some English, bothered himself about my stateroom on the next boat, introduced me to a Petrograd family, friends of his, who spoke English—in short, was as helpful and hospitable as young Russians of his class are likely to be.

It was at the height of the offensive in the Bukowina, and I asked, rather flippantly, how long before the Russians would be in Vienna.

"We shan't try to go beyond the Carpathians," he said seriously; "we shall make no mistakes this time." He asked many questions about our troubles with Mexico. "It's all a matter of petroleum," he said.

For two days the little steamer swam swiftly down through a country washed bright with recent rains. There were wheat-fields and patches of dark pines and white birches—the wistful white lines against black and bright green, characteristic of the Russian plain. There was always a church in sight, and every bend brought a new one—a white church with its cluster of little beet-shaped domes, gold, green, indigo, or sky-blue. Some were monasteries set in a thicket of dark pines and cedars with a white wall round the whole—one looked across the water to a band of white shining above

the low shore, above that a dark belt of pines, and then the gay little domes rioting above the trees.

There was something fantastic in these little domes—they were like the decorations an American illustrator might put on the margin of a book of fairy-tales. They never could have sprung, one felt, from the same kind of religious feeling as that which raised the sharp ascetic spires of New England. You could scarcely imagine Emerson or George Ade or President Wilson or Nebraska farmers living naturally and comfortably with just that sort of architecture. I was reading the "Brothers Karamazov" as we sailed past them, and came across that reply of Mitya's when he was advised to go to the New World and begin his smashed life over again. " . . . I hate that America. And though they may be wonderful at machinery, damn them, they are not of my soul. I love Russia, Alyosha, I love Russia; I love the Russian God, though I am a scoundrel myself. I shall choke there. . . ."

The Petrograd lady, to whom the cadet had introduced me, threw up her hands in mock dismay at the Dostoyevski. "Those dreadful books!" They were so wild, so nerve-racking—one couldn't stand Dostoyevski for more than a few minutes at a time. She had never let her daughter read Dostoyevski—as for most of the Russians writing nowa-

days, of course, no young girl could glance at them. The daughter, who at home would have been reading everything in sight, listened obediently and really gave one the idea she never *had* read Dostoyevski, and never would till her mother gave permission. Like many of these carefully guarded Europeans, she was older in some things and younger in others than most American girls of the same age. Her social judgments were those of a trained woman of the world, but she enjoyed the most infantile games and could not be left alone with a man for more than a moment without beginning to look around uneasily and edge away toward her mother. Once we stood by the rail looking at a birch forest.

"Birches are *our* trees," she said. "Whenever we go travelling in Europe and I see a white birch, I am homesick for Russia."

The next day or the next, late in the afternoon, a railroad bridge high in air, like the bridge across the Hudson at Poughkeepsie, appeared downstream. It carried the railroad which leads from Archangel and the White Sea down to Moscow—much used for munitions these days—and, lest we might whistle or shake our fists at it and bring it down, we were all ordered, war fashion, into the saloon. Just below the bridge came Yaroslav, an old town of about a hundred thousand people, and

the first chance we had to enjoy the pleasant river custom of going ashore and getting a bit acquainted.

Yaroslav made me think of towns in Spanish America. There were similar low stucco houses, painted white and tan, and even pink and blue; the same National Cash Register and Singer sewing-machine agencies—it is pronounced "*Zing-ger*" in Russia, and supposed, in these suspicious days, to be something or other German. The churches were just as many, although Greek instead of Roman, and the peasants, praying and crossing themselves there, represented a stage of development not unlike that of the peons of Mexico and South America. The moving-picture shows and occasional corner bootblack had the same exotic air, and altogether one had much the same feeling of being out of the world and set back into the life of several generations ago.

In the shady park, which is a fixture of all these Russian provincial towns, people were promenading much as they do in Spanish America, and in the dark, roving eyes, the brooding melancholy of some girl sitting alone with an open book in her lap, there were continual hints of a capacity for intense feeling, of minds inclined to gloomy longings and despairs.

The park walk led down to a promenade on the

edge of the bluff above the river, where girls, two by two, student boys in belted blouses, and jolly young officers, in tan blouses and high tight leather boots, were walking. We were still in the zone of the white nights, although two or three degrees south of Petrograd now, and, although it was already ten o'clock, the daylight still held. The broad river, down below, was smooth as glass and covered with little boats—people out rowing, singing, just staying up, without thought or worry, as people do in the white nights.

I went back to the steamer, and, taking one of the little tables on the open deck, had some tea. Other passengers, at other little tables, were chatting in low tones and also sipping tea. Now and then oars splashed close by. Once a boat came under the stern with a girl rowing, a girl in white, with fine shoulders, and another girl and a young man in the stern, strumming a balalaika. And over everything the white night threw its curious unreality. Things close by or facing the hidden sun stood out in a sort of afterglow; those between one and the brighter side of the sky were in silhouette.

Across the bridge up-stream, in the luminous stillness, slowly rolled a tiny train, like something on the stage, cut from cardboard. And the war, toward which that little toy train was doubtless

carrying shells and ambulances and automobiles, became almost immaterial, something that here, in this inner Russia, was only a sort of tragic undertone.

Suddenly, in one of those far-off specks of boats, a girl began singing. One couldn't see her or see anything but that tiny silhouette, and the voice rose like a disembodied spirit. It rose across the hushed water, higher and clearer, as if she were trying to sing all the beauty of the night, and the loneliness of Yaroslav, and the tragedy over there in the west. It rose and rang, and all at once one had fallen in love with a silhouette half a mile or so across the river. Beautiful she must be, and as the steamer was sailing in a moment she could always remain so. And out of the flickering stream of things had come one of those instants which one does not forget—that unknown lady of Yaroslav one would never know, and the white night, and the little train rolling across the high bridge, and the voice ringing out across the amber water.

The Petrograd young lady, who had also heard the singing, remarked next day that she thought the voice a trifle strained, and that, for her, singing, and indeed all art, ought to be restrained, just so, and a little below rather than above the artist's strength. We were passing Kostroma at that time and the cotton-mills of the Konavalofs—one of

those patriarchal cotton-spinning families of which there are a number in Russia.

A little farther on came Nizhni Novgorod, where the great fair is held every August, and where another river, nearly a thousand miles long, the Oka, comes in from the south, bringing with it the water of the little river which flows through Moscow. Nizhni is both new and very old, and one rides in modern trolley-cars past ancient saw-tooth Tatar walls, which go back to the fourteenth century. The quarter where the fair is held lies across the Oka from the city proper, and is a little city by itself. There are four thousand shops in the main bazaar and four thousand more outside of it, and they look, during all that part of the year during which they are closed, a good deal like the wholesale grocery section of an American city on a Sunday. In August, however, four hundred thousand strangers come to Nizhni from all over Russia and near-by Asia, over a billion dollars' worth of business is done, and prices and credits, in many lines, are fixed for the rest of the year.

We got to Nizhni before breakfast time, and I gave up the luxury of coffee under the deck awning to experimenting with a provincial hotel. There was a big, hot dining-room full of men, flies swarmed, and waiters with sashes about their loose blouses pattered about with big china pots of hot water

and tea. An ikon, according to Russian custom, looked down from the corner of the room, and many turned toward it and crossed themselves before and after eating. There was a good deal of loud, good-natured talking, and here and there, as always in a Russian tea-drinking place, bearded, prophet-like individuals gazing into space, and thinking of nothing, doubtless, but looking as if they were grappling with the riddle of the universe.

". . . If a dozen Englishmen get together, they at once begin to talk of the submarine telegraph or the tax on paper, or a method of tanning rat-skins, or something, that is to say, practical and definite, but let a dozen Russians get together, and instantly there springs up a question of the significance and future of Russia, and in terms so general, beginning with creation, without facts or conclusion; they worry and worry at the unlucky subject as children chew away at a bit of India-rubber. . . ." This was written a good many years ago, about *intelligentsia* more sophisticated than the men in the Nizhni dining-room, but it doubtless applied to some of them, nevertheless.

Russian hotels reflect Russian society. There is, comparatively speaking, no middle class, and, so far as hotels go, one jumps from the best to the worst. In a provincial hotel of this sort guests bring their own bedding often, bugs of various

Nizhni-Novgorod—The old rampart in the foreground, the quarter where the great fair is held across the river. The right branch is the Volga, the left the Oka.

kinds are taken more or less for granted, and the wall-paper of these dismal rooms is frequently spotted with the slain. The crudity of most of these places was one of the reasons for the popularity of the Volga trip. For the boats were clean and comfortable, one got a glimpse of all the towns along the way, and could travel clear across Russia and back again without once bothering to show a passport or report to the police, as the stranger usually must wherever he spends the night.

When you order tea in such a place, the waiter brings a glass, a slice or two of lemon, a little pot of tea, and hot water in a big china pot, so thick that it keeps the water hot forever. You pour about half an inch of tea into the glass, fill it up with water, and keep this up indefinitely. It is one of the few cheap things in Russia. The humbler people do not put sugar into their tea generally, but clip a bit off a lump with a pair of pincers and hide it away under their tongues somewhere. At Nizhni that morning there was no sugar at all, on account of the war, and they served little colored lozenges like cough-drops.

The tea which rounds off every Russian evening at home is a delightful institution. The tea is so weak—merely hot lemonade with a dash of real tea—that it won't keep any one awake. The samovar with its charcoal fire and rising cloud of steam

is as cheerful as an open fireplace, and round it people can talk for hours.

We tied up next morning at the shabby collection of shops and dilapidated hotels, which serve as the river station for the city of Kazan, some five miles away from the river. Kazan was the capital of the kingdom established by the Golden Horde when they drove the Bulgars out of these parts, and it is now a city of nearly two hundred thousand people, with a university, and the intellectual centre, in a way, of this middle and lower Volga country. It sounds more Oriental than it looks, but it has a considerable Tatar quarter, and a Tatar family got aboard the steamer. The father was a little, middle-aged man with thick spectacles who looked like a Chinese mandarin dressed in western clothes. The wife was an odd, pasty-faced little woman with queer clothes, and there were two adorable little children. The boy was particularly quaint, and when the passengers played blind man's buff he would run back to his father, nearly wriggling out of his skin with excitement. The tall Pole, after regarding the Tatar gravely for some time, remarked: "He's a good father!"

The Kama, with the water of the west slope of the Urals, comes in below Kazan—the Pole and his daughter scanning it with some curiosity as the beginning of their later adventures—and from here

the Volga swings south. It crosses the province of Simbirsk, and at the town of Simbirsk we lost part of our happy family—two sisters and a brother on their way, with their Finnish governess, to spend the summer with relatives in the country. They were a lonely trio, who had known little of life, except what they had seen in remote country houses and convent schools or read in books, and the boat and the people they had met had been a great adventure. The older sister, a shy, pinched little lady of twenty-two or twenty-three, was full of tears. They all spoke a little English, in a slow, precise way, but the good-natured, sensible governess talked it, as well as several other languages. She had often helped me with the Russian bill of fare, and she spoke interestingly of books, schools, and things in general. American children's books she liked particularly, she said, and every well-brought-up Russian child knew in translation Louisa Alcott's stories and "Little Lord Fauntleroy."

The river was wide now, a slow-flowing brown flood with frequent sandy islands. Big oil-tankers, deep laden until they were almost awash, were being pushed up-river, with petroleum from Baku. Passenger-steamers went by, with waving handkerchiefs, and every few miles we passed huge log rafts. They were guided with long sweeps, and the lumbermen—there were women sometimes—

slept in a little shack and cooked over an open fire as if they were still in the woods—a curious life, drifting almost imperceptibly week after week; in the world, yet out of it, with gay steamers swashing by, shaking the whole raft as if it were cloth stage waves.

When the Russians, driving the Mongols back, took Kazan and pushed down to the Caspian, they needed frontier forts to keep the river open, and founded the cities of Samara, Saratov, and Tzaritsyn. They are busy modern towns now. Samara, which comes first, has more than a hundred thousand people, and is on the main railroad line to Siberia. Saratov, lower down, is still bigger and livelier. With its asphalt and trolley-cars, brand-new university building, big station, and general air of business, it is a good deal like some growing city in our own Southwest.

One morning, in this part of the river, I got off at a little station to buy some cherries, and an old man who saw me with them asked in German if there were any more for sale. When I replied, he said, "*Sind sie Deutsch?*" as if to find a German here in war-time and speak German to him would be quite a matter of course. He was one of the German-Russians of whom there are many in this part of Russia. They were brought in at the invitation of Katherine II, in 1762, and lands and

special privileges given them with the idea that they would educate the natives. The latter haven't imitated them very successfully, and the colonists have remained German in much the same way that they have in our own Pennsylvania Dutch country. You will still find such names as Zurich, Unterwalden, Süsenthal, Luzerne, Katerinstadt, and so on, the villages are always cleaner and thriftier than those about them, and the descendants of the original settlers still cling to their fathers' tongue.

Since the war their position has not been pleasant. Although Russian citizens, many have been treated as enemy aliens and driven from their homes, and their whole experience is another of those by-products of the world war whose solution will be one of the countless problems in its final liquidation.

The passengers were well acquainted by this time, and began to feel as if they were on their own house-boat. Every few hours the steamer would swing round with the current and come up to a wharf, nose up-stream, and everybody crowded to the rail, more sights to see. There was always a gendarme at the gangway, the same symbol of imperial authority which one would have seen in Petrograd, or Omsk, or Tomsk, or Vladivostok, and there was always a little herd of peasants—men, women, babies, packs, and teakettles—waiting, with

their look of driven cattle, to push on or push off, or, rather, to do both at the same time.

Those who stayed at home lined up against the wharf-shed, staring at us and chewing sunflower seeds. The Russian peasants chew sunflower seeds as Americans—not peasants, necessarily—chew gum. They are extremely expert, and without looking or thinking, apparently, crack the seed between their teeth, lick up the meat, and spit out the shell, like so many squirrels. If a peasant stands still for half an hour, he leaves sunflower-seed shells all round him.

If there were time, passengers went ashore, to come back with strawberries and cherries, hard-boiled eggs, milk, cheese, bread, fried fish, and even whole roast chicken. Russians are great at this sort of foraging. They make good gypsies. Families travel with vast lunches, and all but the most uppish sort of people carry a teapot as a matter of course. Half the passengers on our boat ordered little from the ship-kitchen but tea and an occasional hot made dish—the rest they picked up, at peasant prices, on the way.

Every Russian railroad-station of any size has its buffet and samovar always steaming, and even in the dreariest places one can almost always get at least hot tea. And with hot tea almost anything solid can be made into a passable lunch. Gen-

erally, too, there is a big hot-water tank on the station platform, with a wood-fire always burning, intended primarily for soldiers, but open to anybody. In the *traktirs,* or cheap tea-houses, the proprietor not only permits but expects his customers to bring their lunch.

So it was on the boat. The first-class passengers were always bringing candies, biscuits, and preserves to the table, while the second-class brought their bread and hard-boiled eggs and fruit, and often ordered nothing but tea. With part of the big pot of hot water they washed the cups and the fruit they had bought, then crushed the fruit in a glass and stirred it up with the tea. All this easy-going scouting ashore and lunching aboard ship made one feel mightily superior to our modern devices for taking the fun out of travelling and shooting people from place to place, like packages in pneumatic tubes, in rooms as near as possible like the ones they are trying to escape from.

The first-cabin dining-room was at the bow and the second-cabin at the stern. The promenade went round the two, and the staterooms were in between. There was little difference between them except that the first-cabin rooms were forward, where the breeze was fresher. Several of the first-class passengers were well-to-do, even rather sumptuous Jews, who suggested Spaniards and Armenians

rather than flower-and-feather lofts and ready-made clothing.

There was a widow with a spoiled little boy—a handsome woman with purple-black hair, who looked like a Zoloaga portrait, and was continually disappearing into her stateroom and reappearing, swathed in divers shawls and mantilla-like draperies, lest the likeness be lost. Then there was a comfortable-looking manufacturing family from Moscow, consisting of a pleasant mother, a grown son who would have passed at home for a Turk, and two unmarried daughters with opulent lines.

The younger had just been graduated from the university, and combined in the quaintest fashion the look of a thoroughly modern young woman who knew what women were doing and thinking in the West with an air and walk that suggested shady Oriental courts, cushions, and splashing fountains. She had the look of wanting to know people, but was shy and reserved, and when she did talk to strangers, it was always with a grave air of defense, as if she knew the danger of being snubbed and were not going to give any one the chance.

I was talking one day with a Duma member, a highly educated, nervous little man who spoke rapidly and with great vivacity, then suddenly would stop and have no expression at all. The

Jews, he said, had not improved their condition since the war. Those who went as soldiers gave up too easily. Most of the spies had been Jews. After they were captured they often became interpreters for the enemy, and as they were well treated in this job, they could take an aggrieved air and say that they were treated better by the Germans than they were at home. The Jews themselves say that such reports were systematically circulated by the old régime as part of its anti-Jewish propaganda.

It is natural that many spies should be Jews, for the simple reason that the neighborhoods across which the lines run, where spies would be useful, are those thickly inhabited by Jews. And certainly their past persecutions and the suspicion with which even those who enlisted were regarded was not calculated to add to their enthusiasm or loyalty.

Any one who has had even a superficial acquaintance with the easy-going Russian can understand his opposition to the Jew. It is a simple case of self-preservation. In the Pale, in such a town as Minsk, for instance, the characteristics about which the rest of the world generally complains are more accented than among the Jews we see in America. To the Russians, indeed, these poor people seem less like fellow citizens than a sort of alien beast of prey. Yet it is difficult to tell which

is cause and which effect, and easy to imagine that if one were treated as these people have been, one would also become a sort of beast of prey and feel that any victory over the Gentile was merely getting back part of an unpayable debt.

The second cabin, as is often the case, was the most genial half of the boat, and when supper was over and the passengers there, still lounging about the tables, sipping tea, began to sing, a good many of the first-cabin passengers came back and joined in. The Russians are great hands at singing. They are naturally intensely fond of music, and their church services, without an organ or other artificial music, accustom them early to singing together and carrying a part. Ten minutes after a long-haired young fellow in a student's blouse, on his honeymoon, had started a song, when we were two or three nights out, an impromptu chorus was singing together with as much volume and finish as the average glee-club at home acquires after weeks of practice.

Grouped about him, as he stood with his hands in his pockets, leaning against the saloon-door, were several young people, an officer on his way home on furlough from the front, a priest in his cassock playing chess with the purser, and every now and then joining in, and one big, old boyar of a Russian, with a beard down to his waist, who

had not opened his head since he came aboard at a village station the day before, but as soon as the songs began, joined in with a bass as big as a house. He seemed to know all the songs the young man sang. Everybody seemed to know them. In the most genial fashion, noticing that I was merely listening, they asked if I wouldn't join in, too.

They sang of Stenka Razin, the old-time Volga highwayman, who threw his Persian princess into the river, when his men complained that she was making him soft and forgetful of his robber's work, with the remark that no Don Cossack had ever given Mother Volga such a present as this. Stenka Razin lived in the seventeenth century and cut a tremendous swath up and down the river. He captured Astrakhan and various other river-towns, sailed out into the Caspian, smashed a Persian fleet, and ravaged the Caspian shores, was finally beaten and captured while trying to establish a Cossack kingdom, taken back to Moscow, and quartered alive.

They sang other Volga songs and "Days of Our Life," and a mournful ballad about a man in prison, forbidden in Russia a few years ago. The songs were wild and sad, with big booming basses—songs that belonged to the broad, slow river and the monotonous Russian plain. You could imagine these Russians understanding "Suwanee River,"

or "Home, Sweet Home," or "Old Black Joe," but rather dumfounded before most of the things such a crowd would be singing at home—"Alexander's Ragtime Band," or "You Got a Great Big Baby Smile."

The migratory peasants crowding the lower deck, with their teapots and fried fish and babies, lived quite as if they were still at home and under the roof of their own houses. The pleasant sunshine and enforced idleness attracted many to various sorts of personal renovation. One noble-looking old fellow lay with his head in his wife's lap, while she went through his shaggy mane with a fine-tooth comb. There was one clean-looking peasant girl who was thus minutely gone over by one of her friends. The woman with the comb worked as expertly and as fast as if she was crocheting. One thumb travelled slowly up a part in the girl's hair, the other hand kept the comb darting as the game was speared between its teeth and her thumb-nail. *Snap . . . snap . . . snap . . .* So she went over the whole head, one part after another, as methodically and rapidly as if she were knitting. When it was done the girl raised her flushed face, shook out her long hair, quickly did it up, tied a black net over it, and a white kerchief over that, and became a fresh-faced, clean-looking peasant again.

At Saratov half a dozen passenger-boats met, and there was a great waving of handkerchiefs and visiting back and forth. After watching them a while I went ashore, and on the wharf ran into quite another current. A woman with four children, with a few household things and a dirty mattress, were camped there—one little drop from the deluge of refugees which poured back across Russia during the retreat of 1915.

I gave the little girl one of the stamps which pass for small change in Russia now, and when I came back, half an hour later, the mother hurried over to meet me. She lifted up her baby boy to press his crumby lips against my hand, just as peasant mothers lift their babies up to kiss the holy pictures in church. And, weeping, she poured out her story. They had come up from Astrakhan because they all had malaria there. Her husband had gone off to try to find work, she had nothing, no place to go, what should she do? Millions, literally, of people just like her were asking the same question—and there was no answer. And in the middle of her story the big steamer whistled and swung on down-river.

At one of the village stations several hundred peasant boys, a new levy of cannon fodder, were lined up on the beach, waiting for the boat. They were bound for some drilling-place farther south.

It seemed as if the whole countryside thereabout must have been swept clean of young men. They were jolly enough about it, however, and came tramping aboard in their sheepskin jackets, with their teakettles and balalaikas, and danced and wrestled and sang, as husky and thoughtless as so many young range steers.

With them came a handful of prisoners—six or eight Austro-Hungarians and two or three Germans—on their way down-river to work, it was said, in an ammunition factory. Their uniforms were patched, several limped, and one or two looked as if they had just left the hospital. Jammed in with the peasants on the lower deck, they stared at the water, or tried to play cards, or blinked up at the passengers, staring down at them, as if it mattered little what came next.

That evening a thunder-storm cleared the lower deck and drove everybody under cover. After it was over and most of the passengers had gone to bed, I was taking a turn around the still dripping deck when the prisoners came out by the stern. One had part of a package of cigarettes, which he divided carefully all round, another produced a ragged little note-book and passed it respectfully to the only one among them who had any officer's marks. In the book were written down the words of their songs, and, with the officer leading, they started in to sing.

They sang "In Der Heimat" and "Die Wacht am Rhein," and it was quaint enough and characteristic of easy-going Russian ways to hear this war-song rising there in the depths of Russia and to see the peasants shuffle out to listen solemnly and wonder what these strange sounds might mean. A hundred indefinable differences of race and temperament were felt in these songs, so different from the dirge-like ballads the Russians had been singing. Quaintest of all, perhaps, was when they began on "*Schifflein, schifflein,*" and "Little ship, little ship, take me back home," rose gayly, in true *Männerchor* style, above the rumbling and splashing of the screw.

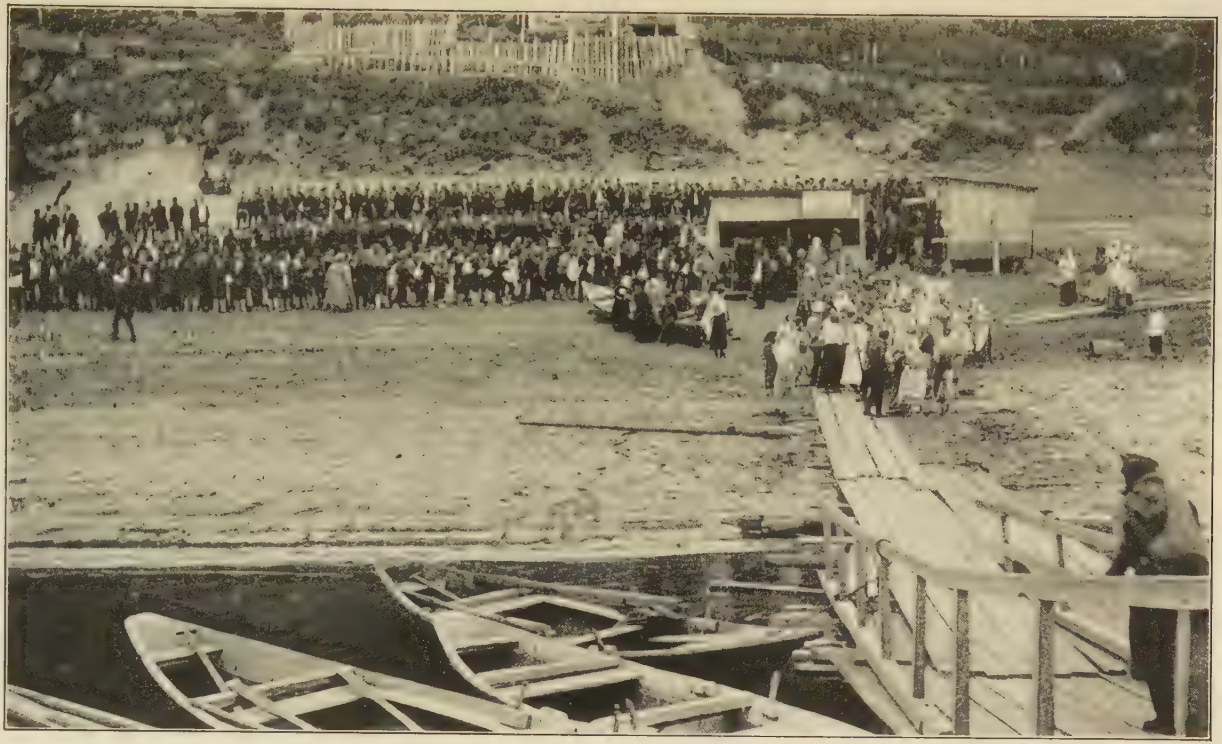
A lady in black, with black-rimmed glasses, who had got on at one of the provincial towns, leaned over the rail beside me. "I am afraid," she said in French, "that our soldiers are weeping instead of singing, back there in their country." I told her of the hundreds of Russian prisoners I had seen in Hungary, the summer before, working in the wheat-fields and riding round on hay-wagons without any guard, almost as if they were at home.

We were long since past the gay little churches and forests and green fields of the upper Volga, and coming now to the bare steppe country. Over to the west, separated by a narrow isthmus, was the Don, another great Russian river, and over there the province of the Don Cossacks. The west bank

was high and steep, and goats crept like flies across it. Droves of cattle came down through "draws" between the hills for water, and often there were men bathing horses, and swimming, themselves, in the warm, muddy river. One got whiffs of a cattle and wheat country over there behind the hills, and at several of the stops the beach was covered with grain-sifters—"dust-mills," as their German labels had it—left there by passing steamers and not yet carted away to the ranches.

At Tzaritsyn, which, for us, pausing there during a breathless summer evening, was only a stairway up the bluff and a dusty walk at the top, and a lonely little summer-garden and movie theatre, the river swings sharply southwestward, and the Volga delta begins. The main stream was nearly two miles wide sometimes, and eighty feet deep. The whole country was low and more or less flooded with the high summer water.

Swiftly, on the oily brown tide, we swam down through the province of Astrakhan. It is a hot, half-Asiatic country, inhabited principally by the seminomadic Kalmucks and Kirghiz, and in the river proper, and the back waters of its two hundred mouths, and in the upper Caspian, thousands make their living by fishing. Enormous quantities, mostly herring and sturgeon, together with the caviare which comes from one variety of sturgeon,



Fresh cannon-fodder—peasant recruits waiting for the boat at one of the stations on the lower Volga.

are shipped from here up-river. All along the west bank fish-nets were drying and people wading through overflowed streets. From these waters, doubtless, had come most of the dried fish which we had seen peasants gnawing all the way down the river, as they would gnaw so much toast or baked-potato skin.

Another hot night and in a dazzling morning sun we came sailing down to the white walls of Astrakhan. War and the front were more than a thousand miles in an air line northwestward; northeastward for five thousand miles this endless Russia stretched to the Pacific. And we were at the gate to Persia now. The wharf was piled with bales of licorice-root, and all day long the Persian stevedores—handsome, slender fellows, who can carry a whole bale of cotton on their backs, and still contrive to look like descendants of the line of kings—were pattering up the gangway with bales of Turkestan cotton.

We strolled up-town past white walls that made one squint, through another saw-tooth Tatar citadel, where good-natured Russian soldiers were drowsing about the barracks, tried the apricot and sherbet sellers, and under the white cathedral saw sprawled in the rust just such a collection of variegated rags and Oriental faces as you might expect to find in the depths of Asia.

The shade in the little park was blacker and thicker than in the north, and people drowsed on the benches or sipped ices in the kiosk in true tropical fashion. There were irrigation ditches overhung with mulberry-trees, and we stained fingers and faces purple with the wet fruit; we visited a Persian mosque and trailed through a melancholy museum filled with dilapidated dry fish. The Polish gentleman and his daughter and I fulfilled this latter duty, the father and I in the lead, the lovely daughter trailing behind, bored to death. It was frightfully hot.

"My daughter," confided the tall Pole, looking back at her loitering half a block behind, under her parasol, "is a good fellow, and I love her dearly, but she is, you know, just a trifle *capricieuse.*"

It was hot that night, hot and breathless as Kansas in harvest-time, and the youth and beauty of Astrakhan, for whom the visits of the up-river steamers were a social event, came down to walk, two by two, around the deck until the lights were turned out and they were sent ashore. The boat was a pleasant home by this time. I had started in to go to Samara, had stretched the journey to Saratov, and finally come all the way. Everybody knew everybody now, and one was tempted to go back and see the river and the towns, and the peasants chewing sunflower seeds, all over again.

But life is short and Russia is long, and at Saratov I left the steamer and took an overnight express. All evening, with windows open, we rode through cool, fresh-smelling prairie country, like our own Middle West, and in the morning, a week ahead of the boat, saw the golden domes of Moscow.

IX

VOLGA REFUGEES

We are by no means a cruel people.
But dreadfully cruel things happen in our country.
We can make penal servitude into hell, and life into penal servitude.
All thanks to our inability to take measures in time.
The tendency to delay.
To delay fatally.
Always, and in everything.
It had been decided in the face of the astonishing invasion of the enemy to leave for him a desert.
That is the business of the war-chiefs.
Our business, the business of the rear, was to organize the reception of these millions of people who have been deprived of everything in order that the enemy may be beaten.
Obviously the movement of the fugitives from their villages did not begin yesterday. It is the ninth, the tenth week:
—That they have been on the road.
It is the fourth month since they started—and only now in the province of Mogilev:
—Are they building barracks.
This elemental movement
Was more than human strength could manage.
To save all from disease was impossible.
But we could have discounted this movement.
Could have reckoned:
—When and where the fugitives would be.
The distance such and such. A horse in a day can do so much.
This is a "train problem," the sort that pupils in the first class in school work out. . . .

—From Doroshevitch's "The Way of the Cross."

It was at Astrakhan that I ran into some of the backwash of that flood of humanity which poured eastward across Russia from Poland and Galicia during the great retreat of 1915. This particular

stream had flowed across the Urals and down into Turkestan as far as Tashkend—almost to Bokhara. Typhus had taken half of them there and driven the rest back into Russia, to be scattered through the villages and wheat-fields of the lower Volga.

For a fortnight we had been sailing down the great river with nothing to do but eat, read novels, and watch the view. More than a thousand miles, and a wall of sleeps and splendid lazy days, shut us away from the west. The half-Asiatic air of Astrakhan made the war seem even farther. And it was at the close of that baking day that we were suddenly brought back to reality when a big lighter swam alongside, jammed with these people who had not forgotten the war for a minute since they had been driven from their homes nearly a year before.

They were a remnant of that other "grand army" which dragged eastward across Russia under conditions not dissimilar to those under which Napoleon's much smaller army retreated from Moscow. Everybody has his picture of that—snow, crows, broken limbers, frozen men and horses—the last of the half million that marched to conquer Russia and staggered back, a scant twelve thousand, across the Niemen. But of the retreat of this civilian army, comparatively little is known in the west. It was forgotten in the other excitements of the

war, and for us, particularly, in the nearness and understandableness of Belgium. Perhaps the easiest way for Americans to summarize the story is to imagine it in terms of Belgium—imagine all the Belgian "ifs" really come true—*if* there had been little or no organized relief, if, instead of living in densely populated western Europe, the Belgians had been uprooted and strewn across a comparatively empty continent.

When Antwerp fell it was only a few hours' walk to the Dutch frontier. England and France, with every sort of modern charitable machinery, were but a few days away. Even those who remained behind had at least their own roofs to cover them and various sorts of relief, presently, including our own. The Russian refugees were in an utterly different situation. Driven from their homes, they journeyed for weeks sometimes under conditions not unlike those faced by our own forty-niners, and then, loaded into cattle-cars, were distributed through regions which might be compared to Montana or British Columbia in winter.

There were still echoes of it in Petrograd and Moscow—how the trains jammed with people, already weakened by weeks of tramping and lack of food, started across Russia in winter, dropping handfuls along the way. Fifty would be assigned to this station, a hundred to that. Doors were

opened, the number counted off, the train started again. Sometimes families kept together, sometimes not. There were all sorts of illnesses on these trains, paralyzed old women lying in the cold for days, unable to move. Hands and feet were frozen; people died where they lay. These things happened, not because anybody willed it or wished it, but because there was no plan, no means to carry out a plan if there had been one—no other way.

The beginnings of this flight of civilian fugitives I had seen myself the year before as we followed the advancing Austro-Hungarian army up into Brest-Litovsk. All one day we drove past a line of peasant carts—peasants just like these now meeting us at Astrakhan, but sifted through the military net somehow—creaking past us, westward, back to their homes. Brest-Litovsk itself, a city of fifty thousand, was merely smoking walls, and all those people were scattered somewhere over behind that curtain of dust and smoke in the east.

With them, as it happened, was the Moscow journalist Doroshevitch, whose story, written in his curious style, every phrase a separate paragraph, bridges the gap between what I saw then and was seeing now at Astrakhan. Doroshevitch travelled westward through the refugee stream at just about the time that we were travelling eastward. I wrote then of the "dust of the great retreat," and it is

almost like having a man call to you from the opposite bank of the river to find him writing also of the dust, of "gray carts and people, like visions . . . dust like a wall, in which you travel as in smoke, as in a dense fog."

There was, he writes, one plan—fugitives were to be forced to go as far as they could with their own horses. The streams were shunted down this road, down that, until, finally, trains could take up the remnant and carry it farther east. Under their dust-clouds these streams pushed slowly eastward, consuming everything, like locusts. They cut trees for fire, dug up the peasants' potatoes; where they had passed there was not even grass left. Their carts were piled and hung with the strangest things—sometimes they would be carrying nothing but an iron roof, the most valuable thing they could bring away.

Often behind the carts is tied on a Viennese chair.

They had been proud of this chair.

—It had been their chair for guests.

—They didn't get along anyhow in their home. They had Viennese chairs. Theirs wasn't an izba.

And now when they sleep in the woods and travel slowly along the road in cold and hunger they carry these chairs with them as:

Their most precious possession. . . . Suddenly amid the gray lines are seen—bright patches.

Peasant women came along in bright new shawls.

Ornamental, sumptuous. . . . With such tired and mournful faces and yet dressed in their festival clothes. . . . This is the most dreadful of all.

These people have come to the very last.

Everything else has been worn out; it has all gone to rags, changed to tatters.

And at the last stopping-place the peasant woman has taken out of her box, or from the bottom of some little tub, her best clothes which she has hidden there till then. . . . The very last.

To the last, too, they kept their horses. A horse was a sign of respectability. That gone, they were nothing. The government bought horses at certain places, and these stations were crowded with them—tired horses trying to pick up a little grass from the trampled ground. These stations were littered, too, with abandoned carts, the iron parts taken away, wheels lying separately. There were thousands of them—the plain was gray with carts.

A farmer whose cattle had been drowned in one of the Minsk marshes, when a sudden order had come to clear the road, had saved one horse—"a little shaggy horse, ten years old, but active. In Roslavl a man permitted him to live in his bathhouse. He was going to stay there with his horse and drive a cab." In Saratov I myself ran across just such a man. He drove me across town from the station and confided, in the quaint, talkative way of the Russian *izvoschik*, that he was a refugee

from Warsaw. Many of the cabmen with whom one wrangled in Moscow and Petrograd very likely had similar histories and before the war farms of their own.

There were relief stations, but they were a drop in the bucket—a pail of milk sometimes for a regiment of hungry babies. The fugitives, sleeping on the ground, where they sometimes scorched their bare feet overnight with their own fires, drinking any sort of water, living on half-cooked vegetables, came down with all sorts of diseases. There were typhoid, rheumatism, dysentery; among the children scarlatina.

In a sort of panic fear of being lost the people from different neighborhoods tried to keep together, yet continually were separated. A man went to wait in a bread line, and his friends forgot him. A mother got off the train to fill her tea-kettle from the hot-water tank, which is a fixture at every Russian station, and the train went off without her. In the American crèche in Petrograd I saw a little boy who had been lost in just that way. There was another at the embassy—a droll, solemn, soft-hearted youngster who spent his spare time copying head-lines out of the American newspapers. He couldn't understand a word of English, but would carefully copy the letters and then bring you the paper with somewhat the

pleased air with which a dog will lay at your feet something he has dug up.

They were trying to make him useful and sent him one day with a letter to the branch office a few blocks away. The letter did not arrive, and they found he had given it to the policeman on the corner. The first sight of that long, brown coat and sword had overpowered him, and he had turned over the letter at once.

There must be hundreds, thousands of such cases. No records to go to, little chance of tracing them until the war is over. The fear of being left behind pursued them even with their sick and dead.

They do not bury, but:

—Dig holes for the dead, as the peasants say.

—Because it is without the requiem hymn. Surely such an act is not a burial.

In the daytime, at the stopping-places, at the relief and medical points, they:

—Conceal their corpses, fearing that they may be delayed by formalities:

—and remain behind!

They carry out the corpses from the forest where they have spent the night and bring them to the road.

They must bury them in a place where the people pass by.

—Where man coming past will cross himself and pray for the soul of the departed. For, you see, the dead have not had their due singing and prayers as at a proper funeral service.

All along the road were crosses. And always they tried to put them in the most beautiful places.

They put up a little fence or covered the grave with pine branches, or stuck a single branch in the earth, or tied on the crosses embroidered belts, or clean white towels with embroidered ends.

Others see:
—That it is a nice place.
And lay their own dead with the others, side by side.
And yet more come, and yet more.
And the cemetery grows, stretching itself out along the margin of the road.

The peasants in the country through which the refugees passed gave, meanwhile, everything they could. You need it more than we do, they said—what's the difference?—*nitchevo.* And in the fugitives themselves was seen that patience, cheerfulness, and faith which seems the support of all people in such times. It is as if those who reach the bottom and lose everything feel somehow freed.

Some Polish women are carrying on wooden stands large pictures of the Mother of God, all in dark ribbons, hung with branches of evergreen, adorned with withered flowers.

They carry the ikons the whole road, hundreds of versts, in the hands.

They go forward as if seeing nothing in front of them.
As if they felt no tiredness whatever.
In a sort of broken ecstasy.
As if they were going to heaven.
And, never ceasing, loudly they sing.
They do not complain, but give praise.

Bit by bit the streams decreased. Moscow, Kiev, Petrograd swallowed their thousands, villages tens and scores. The rest pushed on eastward across the Urals, into Siberia and Turkestan. The great Russian plain soaked them up at last except where some such barrier as the typhus epidemic in Tashkend drove them back again.

The lighter eased up to the pier, and the people —peasant mothers and children for the most part, with a few wrinkled old hags and able-bodied men —pushed on to the dock with their aimless, hurried air of driven cattle. Already, somebody said, they had been a month on the way. Nearly every one, even the old women and small boys, staggered under a bundle almost as big as himself. Behind them came their gendarme escort carrying the big, cart-wheel loaves of black peasant bread. This was the ration carried with them, the government allowance. Each, it was said, was supposed to receive twenty kopecks—about ten cents—a day for his keep, paid, during such a migration, in bread. There was nothing else—only black bread.

They were shunted down the gangway to the steamboat's lower deck, where they filled the steerage quarters, the deck space forward and aft, and the passageway round the engines. Alongside, meanwhile, came the little transport which had ferried them across the Caspian, and up from its

hold and down into ours began to tumble their luggage. These were the last things, solid things that survive after the horse is sold and the cat and dog left behind, broken-off bits of homes.

The Persian roustabouts, handsome, sweating fellows, shot them down the slide regardless—a battered wash-board, enamelled kettles, chests they could scarcely lift. A clumsy peasant's shovel, home-made evidently, the earth still caked on it, clattered down the side. With that weapon some man had set out to face the world.

The passengers, who had had nothing to do all day but kill time and keep cool, looked down with interest, and a certain disapproval. One lady, franker than most, said that it wasn't quite right for the company to put these people on the steamer. It made one uncomfortable with one's own comfort, and, after all, we *had* paid our money and were on a pleasure-trip. The stuff was soon aboard, however; the steamer turned its nose up-stream, the cool breeze again swept the deck, and the disturbing guests were forgotten for the time in the more intense preoccupation of dinner.

It was well along in the evening and dark when I went below. One opened a door and stepped from the cool and playful leisure of the passenger deck into a sort of inferno. The air was stifling with heat and the smell of oil and unwashed hu-

Refugees with their packs leaving the steamer in which they had been brought across the Caspian.

After landing across the river from Saratov—waiting for the train.

manity. Electric lamps blazed all over the place, the engines hissed and pounded, and in this heat and noise the people, packed so that you could scarcely avoid stepping on them, were trying to quiet squalling babies, arranging and rearranging their wretched bundles in the effort to get something soft to lie upon or achieve a little privacy, or, lost to everything, sprawled on their backs asleep with unconscious faces turned up to the blazing lamps. A baby with rickets lay in a little wooden trough, a sort of wash-dish or chopping-bowl, whining and twisting. The mother, a frail-looking woman with a sweet, patient face, kept rocking the little trough. It was no use—the baby kept on crying. She lifted it—its helpless legs dangled like sticks—and tried to nurse it. But still it cried.

There was no milk for any of the babies—nothing but the soggy black bread. Some of them sat up, picking at chunks of it or at bits of sausage with their little blue fingers—listlessly, as if it were only some instinctive working of their muscles.

On his knees in the engine passageway an old man was praying. His eyes were fixed on the ikon on the opposite wall—the ikon always found even in such public places, in your hotel room, in railroad waiting-rooms—and from time to time he crossed himself with the Russian's wide, rhythmic gesture, and bowed till his forehead touched the

floor. Lips moving, his eyes strained toward the sacred image, in a sort of trance, as if he looked clear through the incredible, intolerable present, to paradise itself.

Others in the crowd were on their knees, facing the ikon and bowing and crossing themselves. And that cry of Dostoyevski's, "Are we worth it!" somehow came back to one's mind. What, after all, had these people done?

At home they would at least be going somewhere. There would be relief up ahead, smiling, capable, kindly women with coffee and sandwiches, milk for the babies, blankets, and places to get clean. Just such smiling, kindly women were in every town we passed, glad to help if they had known, or there had been any machinery for helping. Individual Russians are the kindest people. But there was no such machinery: people are used to having things happen in which they are not consulted. Down from above, from that impersonal, far-reaching power, whose very severity was thought necessary to hold this vast, loose, easy-going mass together, had come an order. So-and-so . . . to such and such a place. . . . And they moved on—just as millions have gone on in Russia in the past, and nobody knew.

I went on deck. People sang at the piano, chatted in the dusk, leaned on the rail aft, looking

down at the figures asleep by the stern. It was as if miles instead of inches separated them, as if, for those calm faces turned up to the stars, these people looking down did not exist. Body to body, as close as they could lie, they slept. An old man with a thin hawk face lay with mouth wide open; children curled up like puppies in the curve of their mother's bodies; a woman lay on her husband's arm, her waist, unfastened, slipped away from a firm, white breast.

Next morning a collection was taken up; the purser found milk at one of the stations, and the baby with the rickets had something inside of him at once, at any rate. Looking down from the upper deck, we could see, during that day and the next, what expert gypsies they had become. There was nothing the mothers could not dig out of those bundles. Cups and spoons, a clean waist, precious bits of sugar wrapped in a handkerchief, yarn, and needles. Nearly every one had some sort of jar or bottle filled with water and chopped-up cucumbers, which served, apparently, as a sort of relish and drink together, to wash down the soggy, black bread. When the children cried they got a few spoonfuls of this water, or a bit of cucumber to chew on. And, though an almost tropical sun beat down, the fingers of most of the women kept flying —knitting, knitting—socks and mittens. They

worked with the frantic haste of soldiers digging themselves in. And indeed they were digging themselves in, against the second winter they soon would have to fight.

A tall, straight, fine-looking girl leaned on the rail, arms folded and back to the river. Now and then her eyes met those of another, slightly older woman with children, apparently her sister, and a flash of understanding, a quick, vague smile, went between the two. Back in Poland somewhere, one fancied, these two had come from rather different homes than the rest. With other clothes the tall girl might have been "almost anybody." What becomes of girls like that—ordered from place to place across a continent, "absorbed" by some village or town along the river? She looked, as she stared ahead of her, paying as little attention to her companions as to those on the upper deck, as if it might be all one to her now. She would yield to circumstances or stab some one in the back with the same sort of disdain.

In another part of the deck a group of Polish peasants, Catholics instead of the usual Orthodox, sat together, singing over and over out of much-thumbed books, their church hymns. Outlandish rag-dolls came out of those miraculous packs, and children began to dress and put them to bed and feed them with the food which they could imagine,

if they did not have it themselves. Fathers and mothers gathered about the children: that particular square yard of deck belonged to them—that was *their* home.

I was awakened early the third morning by shouting and trampling. We were tied up on the east bank across from Saratov, and the refugees were going ashore. Slipping into boots and overcoat, I hurried out. We were south of the "white nights," but the sun rose early, nevertheless, and although only four o'clock, the meadow and woods above the bank were already sparkling in the brightness of another summer morning. Half the people were already up the bank arranging their packs by the railroad-track, ready for the train that some time or other would be coming along.

Again the chests, kettles, and wash-tubs were coming out of the hold—hit or miss. There were no porters to take them, and women and children, driven by the old fear of being left behind, snatched their pieces as they came, and dragged and pushed them up the bank. One woman screamed and beat her breast at the tall, calm gendarme who was watching the baggage come ashore.

Something was lost, evidently—the last thing perhaps. But where? On the Caspian steamer, on the Turkestan railroad—it might as well have been on the other side of the earth. The gendarme

listened sympathetically, nodded, and shrugged his shoulders. Such things happen on such pilgrimages, but what can one do—*nitchevo!*

Along the track, on the grass still drenched with dew, little family groups began to coagulate again as instinctively as spiders rebuild their webs. There was nothing to eat except what might still be discovered in those miraculous bundles, no one to meet them or to tell when the train would come or where it was going.

It was good, at any rate, after those hideous nights in the engine-room, to be loose in the beautiful morning. The children ran into it with their blessed gift of forgetting. In a minute they were all over the place, picking flowers, discovering all sorts of marvels, pushing sticks into the pond.

The boat whistled, and we started up-stream again. By the time the passengers were awake and ringing desperately for their coffee the sun was high, and all these little specks of human driftwood were shut away behind sunny stretches of the great river. Already they had become vague, as things so easily become in Russia, where the individual is dwarfed by the background across which he moves. And the steamer drove cheerfully northward against the current of the river, which, whether people live or die, rolls on, strong and beautiful and young.

X

RUMANIA LEARNS WHAT WAR IS

WINTER was already in the air and in people's thoughts as we left Petrograd. Out of the endless Baltic rains we rolled at last, down past Kiev, on its hills beside the Dnieper, and into the south-western plains—tremendous billows of wheat and farm land, as if our own still prairie-seas were under a deep ground-swell—just short of Odessa, at a junction full of troop-trains, westward through Bessarabia, and finally, four long days from the Russian capital, over the frontier into Rumania and back to the sun and the summer again.

Indian summer, at any rate, the still, soft, golden southern autumn—yellow corn-fields, plums and pears, and grapes. At every station peasant women were selling them—or, indeed, it seemed, after Petrograd prices, almost giving these luxuries away. Samovars and tea were gone, and the heavy black bread, and pastry stuffed with boiled cabbage; people drank coffee now, and their own native wine. These Rumanian peasants, themselves, with their bright embroidered linen and dark, gypsy

eyes, had, after the shaggy muzhiks of the north, a certain southern grace and lightness, and they, the sun and fruit, and the warm hills, covered with villages and vineyards, brought almost an echo of Italy or Spain.

The four French officers who had come all the way round Europe to join their new ally began to look less disconsolate.

"This *is* a country!" said one, and promptly dismissed Russia, of which he had seen nothing but a Petrograd hotel at its most dismal season, as no place at all: "*Ce n'est pas un pays!*"

I had come to Bucharest before from western Europe, hurried down from Predeal in the dark, and, like most foreigners, was chiefly struck with the rather flashy light-mindedness of the little capital. This way, through the farm lands, one saw quite another side of the country—its grace and richness, and, travelling down the long, awkward arm of their L-shaped territory, one understood how the Rumanians might naturally covet the land across the mountains to the west—Transylvania—that would round it out into a tidy empire.

There was but one train a day now for the whole north-and-south length of Rumania, a long string of shabby, unheated day-coaches instead of the wagons-lits and expresses of peace times. People boiled up on the platforms at every station, packed

coupés and corridors, spread out on the roofs—all Russia's disorder with added gesticulation and vehemence. During the waits the two younger Frenchmen in the new light-blue uniform strolled on the platform, the centre of all eyes. One wore the tam-o'-shanter of the French Alpine troops. Everything else he had on, even his soft collar and handkerchief, was light blue, and in his blue puttees he looked, in contrast with the Russians, in their long, stiff tan overcoats, almost as ready for golf as for war. At the stations the day before herds of Russian soldiers—big, wide-eyed, devoted children, like moose with the gift of speech and faith—had stared at him, awestruck, wondering what he might be, and hearing with slow, incredulous smiles, the whisper: "*Franzuski!*"

The other two were sober navy men, bringing a lot of French sailors, and the elder, as we stood in the packed corridor, began to talk, as perhaps only a Frenchman would, about books. He had not been nearer to America than Havana, but he knew Longfellow's poems and liked them. Anatole France wrote beautiful French, but the soldier did not enjoy him because "he didn't believe in anything." The Germans, strangely enough, had good poets. "They say of us," he smiled, "that Frenchmen can write of the surface of the sea, but can't make one feel the pearl underneath the waves.

It isn't true—yet one knows what they're trying to say."

Night came, but there were no lights, and, packed in the dark, we jolted on without them. As it was almost impossible to fight one's way out to anything to eat at the stations and back again before the train started, we had to go without eating—it was three in the morning when we reached Bucharest. The station was dark, the town dark. Somebody said that a Zeppelin had been reported: coming or going, we were too sleepy to care. There were no cabs, and, stumbling through black streets with gendarmes squinting suspiciously at every corner, we were glad enough to find at last a hotel porter awake and a bed.

I was out again shortly, still fired by the unfamiliar sun, and walking up the Calea Vittorei—that narrow, winding stretch of asphalt, quaintly combining the airs of a great capital and a village street, up and down which, in peace times, patters and sparkles the little capital's frivolous life.

I recalled it as it used to be at five in the afternoon, jammed with carriages and people, smelling of cigarettes and gasoline smoke and women's perfumes, with the operatic young officers ogling from the sidewalk the two streams of victorias rolling by, each with its enamelled face and carmine lips under a slanting black hat, and its flash of silk stockings.

Bargaining for grapes in a Bucharest street with a little Rumanian peasant.

A typical residence street in Bucharest, leading off the Calea Vittorei.

Ammunition was going through to Turkey then, grain and oil over to Austria, and across the footlights every evening Miss Nita-Jo was gayly asking what the prime minister was going to do—and nobody could tell. War had brushed all that aside, and now, in the still, fresh morning, along the almost empty sidewalk, country folk in sandals and embroidered homespun were shuffling under their heavy panniers of fresh prunes and amber-colored grapes. Across from Capsa's, the little pastry-shop where "everybody" takes tea and watches the parade in peace times, the sidewalk was roped off and a sentry guarded the entrance of the Grand Hotel, where the more consequential Austrian and German civilians were interned. The "High Life" café, where the war used to be fought out in all the languages of Europe over the coffee-cups, was closed, like most of the cafés, the fatherly police thinking it just as well to discourage amateur eloquence until the chances of war were a little more certain. The royal palace near by had already been partly turned into a Red Cross hospital, and as I passed a motor drummed in—the young Crown Prince, in uniform now, driving his own car.

I walked up past the Athenée Palace Hotel, full of officers now—Rumanian, French, Italian, Russian—glanced at a book-shop window full of French illustrated papers and yellow-bound French novels,

and presently turned into one of the quiet residence streets. Here, between white-and-tan-colored stucco houses in the French style, where sidewalks skirted garden-walls overhung by chestnut-trees, one felt more strongly that Latin air one had noticed on crossing the frontier. These were people more concerned than Slavs generally are with the graces and gallantries of life. Through basement windows one caught a glimpse now and then of a man cook in a white cap, or looked through tall iron gateways toward quiet enclosed gardens, where carved marble benches or a white nymph gleamed against the yellow autumn leaves.

And over all these things war had cast its sudden and sinister charm. Bucharest was changed, the rakish coquette was a human being, fighting for her life, now, in the universal European shipwreck. And, however drowsily the sunshine lay in these pleasant winding streets, one remembered that the butterfly officers were being shot at now, up in the Carpathians or down in the Dobrudja, and thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of peasants must be killed before the Calea Vittorei was itself again.

I had just said good-by to some friends with whom I had been lunching, and was returning down-town when, suddenly, a gendarme on the next corner began to blow his whistle, people scat-

tered, and ahead, over the centre of the city, cottony balls of shrapnel began to pop in the peaceful blue sky. Above them a tiny hawk came slowly sailing—then another, and another—far aloft and half transparent, like the little silver fish in glass globes. Slowly they swung round, now and then flashing a wing against the sun, and as they sailed, one heard above the pop of shrapnel and the rat-tat-tat of machine-guns the hoarser detonation of exploding bombs.

Previous adventures had made me somewhat bomb-shy, and with due endeavors not to disturb the admirable sang-froid of the housemaids and others who were gazing upward with shaded eyes, I promptly began a rather crab-like progress toward the remoter streets. Here it was quiet enough, but when I entered the hotel half or three-quarters of an hour later, one of the porters, looking as if he had seen a ghost, drew a finger significantly across his throat, and muttered that one hundred and fifty people had been killed in the post-office.

This was not true, but so people talked in Bucharest during the next three days. A bomb had, as a matter of fact, fallen in the busy street behind the central telegraph-office. It had blown in all the windows of the offices for a block on either side, killed several and injured many. The communiqué admitted, as the result of all the bombs thrown that

afternoon, some seventy-five killed and wounded—private estimates were higher.

The streets about the telegraph-office were closed and guarded by gendarmes when I got there, ambulances were whizzing up the Calea Vittorei, and the whole down-town of Bucharest was unstrung. The raiders had flown away, but the cry that they were returning kept reappearing all that afternoon. At each alarm—and they flew back and forth like wind-squalls across a pond—the first gendarme who heard it would blow on his whistle a demoniacal "*Whe-ee-ee-eel!*" The man on the next corner took it up, and so on down the street until, in a few seconds, you could hear those whistles rising and falling—the most dismal sound imaginable—all over Bucharest. At the first whistle iron shutters came banging down, people ducked in wherever they happened to be—there was a fine for refusing such hospitality—and in a few minutes the street would be empty but for the hapless policemen at the corners whistling and scanning the sky.

Boy scouts, adding to the enthusiasm any boys would feel at such a time all the operatic instincts of their Rumanian blood, went streaking up the Calea Vittorei humped over their handle-bars, red bandannas flying, whistling as they rode, and now and then coming up behind one with a sudden shriek that would have made a hippopotamus

jump. They clung to ambulances and army-trucks, and tiny youngsters, with a truly Latin aplomb, jumped on the steps of other people's carriages and peremptorily waving young and old off the streets, rolled out in their shrill soprano voices that the "*aeroplán*" was coming and people must get into their "*casas*."

One huge motor-truck pressed into service as an ambulance was fairly sprinkled with Red Cross volunteers and boy scouts. A nurse in uniform perched on the driver's seat with two tense-faced young men, one of whom hung on to the wheel and the other to her, and with horn and whistles shrieking, motor smoke and bandannas in the wind, this terrifying chariot boomed up and down the street, scattering everything before it. It was droll, and it was tragic, that afternoon, and, after all the past two years had brought, filled with an inexpressible irony—how much they had yet to learn before they, too, would take war as a matter of course, and ambulances be no more than grocer's wagons or trolley-cars!

There was not a light in Bucharest that night except a few street-lamps veiled in blue globes. The merest glimmer brought a bellow from the street. I dined with friends in a little house backed up against another wall, but the lamp was no sooner lit than a policeman was barking at the windows.

We put shawls and blankets over the curtains and finally had to put the lamp on the floor with a newspaper screen around it to satisfy him. My hotel room had a closed Venetian blind, two closed windows, the inner one covered with blue paper and a curtain inside of that. Leaving the blind closed, I had opened the window the merest crack and started to read in bed, when a gendarme and the hotel porter came galloping up-stairs to smash into the room as if the place were on fire.

No one was supposed to walk abroad after ten without a permit from the prefect of police—a gentleman of such charming manner, by the way, that it was a pleasure to be compelled to ask favors of him—and the mere return home after dark, including finding the door, like a secret panel, in the bare, black face of one's hotel, had its touch of melodrama.

I was awakened in the middle of the night rather slowly to become aware that the whistles were wailing as they had wailed that afternoon. These dismal pipings, rising and falling out of the night, are, at such an hour, with perhaps only one story between you and prospective bombs, decidedly enlivening. You pop out of bed like a jack-in-a-box, throw on an overcoat, try to lace up shoes without turning on the light, and with people scurrying along the hallway and shrapnel banging overhead,

it is quite easy to believe that the enemy is, by now, sailing squarely over the hotel. If it is only an aeroplane, the bomb will probably go through the roof, explode on the attic floor, blow that and the floor below pretty well to pieces, and perhaps send only a few fragments through the next—with a couple of stories overhead, you are probably all right. With a Zeppelin, on the other hand, and five hundred pounds of high explosives falling for a mile or two, anything may happen.

All these things go scuttling through one's head, along with a really very entertaining sense of adventure, and the notion one generally has that until things actually happen, they are going to happen to somebody else. And so presently, with a becoming air of indifference and composure, one descends to the first-floor hall, where the guests, wrapped in overcoats and bath-robes, look as if the ship was sinking and they were just ready to take to the boats. So people huddled all over Bucharest that night, according to their temperament and situation—from families squatting dismally in the cellars of their one-story houses, to the comparatively careless guests of the Athenée Palace, able to continue, in the interesting atmosphere of darkened corridors, flirtations begun the evening before.

The Zeppelin had disappeared by the time I got into the street where a few hardy souls gazed,

whispering, at a sky full of frosty stars. Hiding one's feelings not being their fashion, people here could make more of such experiences than they did in London, perhaps, where it was the fashion to assume, under such circumstances, that nothing was happening at all. A few nights later, for example, when no Zeppelin came, although the whistles had hurried us down-stairs as usual, a Rumanian officer began addressing me with great vehemence. I told him that I didn't understand Rumanian.

"I was saying," he continued in French with the same air of defying dispute—"I was saying that there will be *another* list of dead and wounded to-night—*encore des morts et blessés !*"

I suggested that possibly they wouldn't come, after all. "Do you mean to say, monsieur," he cried, "that the guardians of our city are doing this to *amuse* themselves!" . . .

With temperaments so prone to excitement, there was obviously not much sleep for anybody in Bucharest that night, and we were just blinking over coffee next morning when "*Whe-ee-ee-eel*—" . . . the whistles were at it again!

Aeroplanes this time—"those white birds which profane the sign of the cross," as one of the papers said, and more bombs. This sort of thing, especially in a city of one-story houses, gets on one's nerves after a time. There was another raid that afternoon—there were ten in sixty hours, aeroplanes

by day and a Zeppelin at night—and one had scarcely settled down from the last before the whistling for the next began.

A trifle more alert the second night, I was out and in the street betimes and saw the Zeppelin, supported, as it were, on search-light beams, a beautiful, half-transparent monster, like a great pearl pencil, sailing steadily and unwinking across the town. Showing nothing to connect it with the every-day earth, it was quite a creature of another, more mysterious, world, and it was odd to think, standing there in the Bucharest street, with people talking French or Rumanian, that up there were other every-day men like ourselves, with their own intense, little local life, speaking another language, thinking other thoughts—worried, practical men, busy with wheels, rudders, speaking-tubes, and so on, to whom we were only an abstraction, a dull-glowing patch on the flat earth's map.

Abstractions though we were, the raiders made several rather uncanny hits. One bomb smashed a house directly across the street from that of the Russian military attaché, three fell close to Take Ionesco's house, and one struck the little one-story villa in which the British military attaché and his aide were sleeping. This house was L-shaped, three rooms, with a drawing-room at the corner and bedroom at either end. The bomb struck the cornice of the corner room, smashed the front wall, the

room itself, and blew fragments through the partitions into both bedrooms. The British attaché was cut slightly on one cheek; otherwise neither was touched. Had the bomb fallen five feet farther inward, so that its explosive effect would have been confined within enclosed walls, it seemed that the whole house must have been demolished.

No important building, military or otherwise, was struck, so far as I could learn, in those three days, and the punishment fell entirely on civilians or wounded in hospitals. Of the two hundred and fifty, more or less, who were killed and hurt, the greater number were said to have been struck in the open street, and a good many must have been hit by the Rumanian shrapnel. The danger from aeroplane bombs is, of course, not so much being hit by the bomb itself as by fragments, paving-stones and so on, blown out from it. In the yard of the British military attaché's house, for instance, fifty or sixty feet away from the point of explosion, a fragment bored clear through a tree six or eight inches thick. One heavy bomb landing in the middle of the boulevard not far from Take Ionesco's house smashed every window for a block around, broke cornices in the five-story apartment-house near by, and peppered its whole façade with holes as if it had been sprayed with shrapnel.

Once, when bombs had fallen all over town, the

communiqué piously stated that "a hospital, a sanatorium, and an orphan asylum were hit," and again when the communiqué spoke of comparatively trifling damage, there appeared in a parallel column an editorial headed "Assassins," telling of the "——— of victims, dead and wounded, women, old men, and children who have made bloody the pavements of our capital." The blank space was the quaint idea of the censor, left for the reader to fill in with "scores" or "hundreds" as he wished. By the third day some of the Rumanian planes had been brought back from the front, and as soon as they took the air the raids stopped for the time.

Every now and then, during these nervous days, an open touring-car whizzed down the Calea Vittorei, and one caught a glimpse of the beautiful Queen. Once I saw her whirling in from the country just as the whistles were wailing, alone in the back seat, looking skyward like everybody else, shading her eyes with a little purple fan. No Queen in Europe more looks the part. Tall, stately, yet always enveloped in a certain air of romance, she might have stepped from one of those stories of imaginary Balkan kingdoms in which the royal heroine loves the tall, slim soldier of fortune who saves her life, but must bid him farewell in the last chapter and return to her marble halls for the sake of Ruritania and "my people." It would be sad

for the Rumanians to have an uninteresting Queen, and Queen Marie seemed to feel this, and there was always just the necessary touch of the theatre, not too much, as—a cloud of white but for her red cross, for she always appeared in nurse's costume —she swept down the Calea Vittorei graciously smiling toward the rows of uncovered heads.

The palace is a two-story building on the main street, in quite as much danger as anybody's house —there was this interesting all-in-the-family air about many things in Bucharest. There was plenty of personal allusion, and the papers would tell about a former diplomat "who has certainly not become inoffensive by finding refuge in a legation whose official neutrality does not sufficiently conceal the Germanic preferences of its personnel"; or of the perfidious porter of the Boulevard Hotel who locked his front door when people were hunting cover from the aeroplanes; or about the stingy contributions to the Red Cross fund made by a well-known merchant who "has been trading for years on the weakness of our womenfolk for luxury by selling them goods for two or three times their value with the one dream of retiring comfortably some day to Vienna or Budapest."

In the sunny and still vivacious streets, where you would pass now and then smart little demoiselles, looking, but for the Red Cross on their sleeves,

"—Little Demoiselles, looking, but for the Red Cross on their sleeves, like sketches from 'La Vie Parisienne.' . . ."

Take Ionescu, editor of *La Roumanie* and one of those most active in urging Rumania to enter the war.

like sketches from "La Vie Parisienne, I thought of Bulgaria in the first days after she, too, had made the great decision—of the grim silence in Sofia, where there was scarce a sign of war but the occasional levies of peasants, in sandals and sheepskin coats, as wild almost as their own sheep, or now and then a baggage-train drawn by black water-buffaloes creaking slowly through the cold rain.

The Bulgarians knew only too well what war meant. They had just lost a generation of young men in bearing the brunt of a war out of which they got nothing, and they went in a little like battered gladiators, without illusions or enthusiasm, fighting because they knew how and had to. War was still novel to Bucharest. And those who had wanted it were still rather pleased to be in the mode, to have made, as they would say, their "*beau geste.*" And in this mood, they were more than ever contemptuous of the Bulgars. The papers smiled at them in the fatherly fable fashion:

There was once an industrious people who lived peacefully raising peas and beans until bad luck would have it that they take for a King an unsavory adventurer who had no interest in vegetables and wanted to play a great rôle in history. To play a great rôle, a monarch must, as everybody knows, kill a great number of his subjects. This didn't bother the King, but he had to find an excuse and to tell enough lies to stir up his gardeners and make these poor sheep angry. . . .

They were reviled as "Asiatics, true descendants of Attila, with no desires beyond those of primitive man," and enthusiastic editorial writers, unaware, apparently, that what they said of the Slavs south of the Danube might apply equally to their allies on the north, derided their rough furniture and primitive food with all the superior air of boulevardiers.

The Bulgarians had perhaps only one friend left in Bucharest, the faithful Bourchier, Balkan correspondent of the London *Times* since the memory of man, and one of several Englishmen who, before the war, had adopted Bulgaria as a sort of second country. Bourchier is really an Irishman, but his associations with the *Times*, with Cambridge, where he studied, and with Eton, where he was once assistant master, made him "English," in the Balkans at any rate. For years "old Bourchier" was as well known in Sofia as the prime minister. He did a good deal of amateur diplomacy back and forth between the Balkan States, and it was his dream to see them united in the alliance which seemed so near in 1912.

I found him at a writing-table covered with paper and clippings in the top-floor corner room of the Boulevard Hotel overlooking the Calea Vittorei, about as near as he could possibly get to the mathematical centre and most exposed spot in

Bucharest. There was nothing above him but the ceiling and the galvanized iron cupola from which, he patiently observed, he hoped bombs would bounce off into the street.

But bombs, censors, and all the nuisances of a world at war were now viewed with equal philosophy by this gracious old-school journalist who had seen his years of work go crumbling down. He had received a batch of English papers that day and found all his despatches cut to a few lines—you had to be a fanatic now, he said, or people thought you were pro-the-other-side. True, he was still Bulgaria's friend, as he was Rumania's, because he was a friend of the Balkans, and an alliance was the only means by which they could maintain an independent life against the powers that had used them as so much small change before, and would do so again. Bulgaria had shown both greed and fear, but it was not fair to call her action treason. She could easily have been brought over to the Allies if the latter had not completely bungled their case and treated with half-way measures a nation which was in great danger and felt compelled to act at once.

I left Bourchier, with his lost cause, and walked up-town to encounter quite another point of view—that of the redoubtable Take Ionesco, editor of *La Roumanie,* once himself the head of the govern-

ment, and ever since the war the tireless and eloquent advocate of fighting with the Allies. I found him in his pleasant town-house, the same polished, clever, always entertaining person he had been at our first meeting the year before, when he was declaring that he would never be happy until he had seen the Rumanian tricolor floating over the old walls of Buda, and that when the delegates gathered around the green table to make peace, Rumania must be able to take her place with the rest and to say that for her size and resources she had shed as much blood as they.

Three bombs had fallen within a stone's throw of his house. "Of course it will go before the end of the war," he said, and then, with a shrug of his shoulders: "I hate to lose my books." Without waiting for questions, he hurried on to say that undoubtedly his hatred for "those people" was as great as, if not greater than, that of anybody in Europe. There was no bridging the chasm between the German idea and his own instincts of freedom and individualism. He had been talking one day before the war with a German statesman, a very decent, agreeable fellow, with cultivated tastes in certain directions, and they had contrasted their ideas of the functions of government and people.

He had spoken of the tremendous importance of the French Revolution, and said that the execu-

tions of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette in France and of Charles I in England meant more for humanity than a new religion, because they represented not mere mob violence, but the deliberate judgment of the people in their effort to govern themselves. The German had said, "There are centuries between you and me," and he had replied, "There is more than that—there is an ocean!" About the Bulgars Mr. Ionesco was far more bitter than before, when he had spoken of them rather humorously as the "Scotchmen of the Balkans." Their behavior toward Russia, which had given them their independence, was incredible. Their public men could be bought, and though some were intelligent and accomplished—So-and-so, for instance, had a charming appreciation of old French poetry—there wasn't one you could imagine as a friend. I said that, as a matter of fact, I did have a Bulgarian friend, and if they were so impossible, how was it that the English had thought so much of them before the war? "How, for instance," I asked, "do you explain Bourchier"?

"Ah—Bourchier!" cried Mr. Ionesco. "A fine old fellow—absolutely sincere! I've known him for years. The explanation of Bourchier is that he's an Englishman. Once an Englishman gets an idea into his head, nothing can drive it out. Bourchier admired the Bulgars—they're serious,

frugal, industrious—I grant you all that. Having become their advocate, nothing could shake him. Why, in 1914, as the war was breaking out, we travelled east together on the same train. Europe was crumbling to pieces—where's Europe now? It meant the end of everything—of England, perhaps—and what do you suppose old Bourchier was thinking about? All he could think about was what the war might mean to Bulgaria!"

Nevertheless, he did not expect, or wish, to see Bulgaria destroyed. They must be reduced greatly, but a peace that attempted to crush them would not be lasting. There must be a greater Rumania, a greater Serbia, and a diminished Bulgaria after the war. As for the old notion of an alliance, there was, of course, no talking about that now. Austria would, of course, disappear. Mr. Ionesco was dividing up Europe in his always confident and lively way when the whistles began wailing again. "If you'll be good enough to come this way," he said, "I can offer you the safest place we have."

We crossed a court and went into a basement, and with several of his lieutenants and some of his neighbor's family stood under a door for a time. I was already late and, after waiting until the raiders seemed safely distant, was obliged to hurry away without asking what Mr. Ionesco thought about Russia and Constantinople. One of the minor

ironies of Rumania's situation, dependent as she now was on Russia, was the ingenuous belief some Rumanians still expressed that they "could never allow" Russia to control Constantinople.

The Latinism of which such a Rumanian as Mr. Ionesco is likely to make much was now, of course, decidedly in the foreground. In peace times there are many natural ties between this rich, comparatively undeveloped little country and the great industrial nations directly west of it. It imports most of its manufactured articles, and not only has grain, beef, and petroleum to sell, but kept on selling them to its present enemies up to the end. These material ties being broken, sentimental impulses had a clear field, and while the Germanic influence was strong—even then, in my hotel, German was the only other language except Rumanian, which most of the servants spoke—the sympathies of the educated minority, who take their culture and point of view from France, were generally the other way. While it is doubtless true, as the King is said to have remarked before the war, that not more than ten per cent of the people wanted war, yet most of this ten per cent spoke French as commonly as they did Rumanian and regarded themselves as the direct descendants of Roman colonists and the Latins of the East.

Even in peace times this inheritance was con-

stantly recalled, and in the music-halls they threw the face of the Emperor Trajan on the screen just as we do that of a popular political leader at home. And now the little papers were celebrating the sacred union with France and Italy, and flinging fervid appeals toward Greece and Spain:

Spain—a beautiful country, brave people! Spain—land of sunlight, oranges, and flowers, where springs the genial vine, and one hears the joyous music of guitars and castanets! Spain—where people are robust and svelte and hearts beat fast with feeling, where the will is of steel, love passionate, and bravery legendary! Spain—country of Latins, with a glorious past and a future that ought also to be glorious, it is toward thee, in this terrible moment, that all Latinity turns! Spain, full of knightly sentiment, awake! . . .

He who made this appeal, the writer went on to say, was a Danube peasant, a descendant of the colonists of Trajan, of that *Dacia felix*—of Dacia, happy in the distant past, and happy, let us hope, in the not-distant future. But Trajan himself came from Iberia, and so did most of his colonists. It was for this reason that the names of Perez, Zamora, Zorilla, Posadas, and Galicia were found so often in Rumania, and that a Rumanian understood Spanish so easily.

While you were fighting the Moors and, through Columbus, giving Europe a new continent, we, the unknowns of

history, defended Europe against the Turkish avalanche—and that was something. Once established, with God knows what difficulties, we have cultivated the Latin idea; we are soaked in it. Our Latin origin is our parchment of nobility, our only reason for being independent in this part of Europe which is so far from being Latin. . . .

Meanwhile the Rumanian armies were learning what war is, and it was not quite what it had looked to be through the café smoke of 1915. It was not a mere matter of taking the Russian wave at the flood and waltzing down to Budapest. The enemy, regardless of the fact that it was Transylvania the Rumanians wanted and there, beyond the Carpathians, they had hoped to fight, attacked from the south, in the rear, wiped out a whole division at Turtucaia and were, during these aeroplane raids, closing in on Constanza, the only seaport, and in an air-line not more than thirty-five miles from the capital.

Even the Transylvanians revealed that density with which civilians often misunderstand the motives of the armies which come to liberate them, and the melodious French of some of the proclamations reprinted in the Bucharest papers brought a curious echo of those blunter warnings which were posted up on Belgian walls in 1914:

L'Armée roumaine, en marche sur la terre sacrée, où résonne. . . . The Rumanian army, entering the sacred

ground, where the voice of their oppressed brothers has cried out for centuries, has not come as the enemy of those, whatever their race or belief, who remain quietly at home. On the contrary, it is animated by the most paternal sentiments for all the peaceable population. In certain localities it has found, however, those—happily few in number—who do not comprehend or know how to appreciate the spirit of kindness and fraternity in which the Rumanian army advances through the liberated territory. These people receive us as enemies, attack our convoys of isolated soldiers and those marching in small groups.

We find ourselves forced, with the most profound regret, to inform all who take this hostile attitude that we shall use against them the severest measures of repression. And in order that these actions, which lower human nature, shall not be repeated, we shall extend our exemplary measures of rigor to the neighboring population of those places where treacherous attacks of this sort take place. . . .

A day or two after the lull in the aeroplane raids the newsboys were shouting a victory in the south and the crossing of the Danube. I started north again, but as we reached Moscow after seven days and nights of hard travelling, in a driving midnight rain, word had come that the Rumanians were pushed back again and that Constanza had been taken. It was not likely to be said after this war, as it was said after the second Balkan War, that the Rumanians were people who got something for nothing, whatever might be their fortune in the end.